

Imperial Christianity

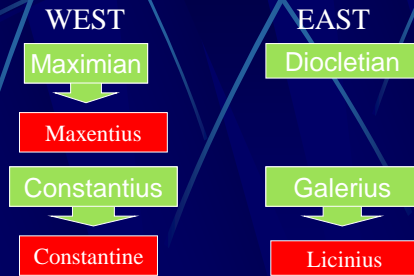
The Rise of Constantine
Two Important Successors
The Theology of Eusebius

Church History At a Glance

The Ancient Church	The Medieval Church	The Reformation Church	The Modern Church
Primitive Christianity (33-200)	Early Middle Ages (500-1000)	(1500-1700)	(1700-1970)
Persecuted 'catholic' Christianity (200-313)	High Middle Ages (1000-1300)	Established Church: Magisterial Reformation	Postmodernism 1970 - ?
Imperial 'catholic' Christianity (313-500)	Late Middle Ages (1300-1500)	Disestablished Church: Radical Reformation	Enlightenment Rationalism: Liberal Christianity
			Pietism Evangelicalism Fundamentalism

The Rise of Constantine

Diocletian's *Tetrarchy*: Rule of Four



Galerius' *Edict of Toleration*, 311

It has been our aim to bring back to a right disposition the Christians who had abandoned the religion of their fathers ... Nevertheless, since many still persist in their opinions, and since we have observed that they now neither show due reverence to the gods nor worship their own God, we therefore, with our great clemency in extending pardon to all, are pleased to grant indulgence to these men, allowing Christians the right to exist, and to set up their places of worship.

Prior to Constantine's battle with Maxentius, he received a vision...

"In this sign you shall conquer!"

...followed by a dream:

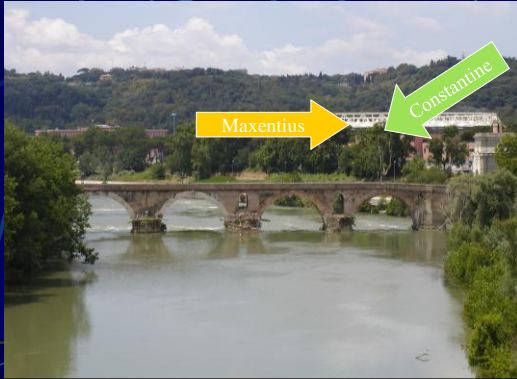


The Battle of the Milvian Bridge, 312



Painting planned by Raphael

The Milvian Bridge today, in Rome



The Milvian Bridge today, in Rome



The Arch of Constantine



The arch served as the triumphal entryway to the Forum, through which victorious generals passed on their way to the steps of the Temple of Jupiter.

Relief of the Battle of the Milvian Bridge from the Arch



Imperial Christianity



**New
Support for
the Church
– and New
Challenges**

Constantine's Conversion?

- Issued the Edict of Milan, 313 AD
- Continued to worship the Unconquered Sun
- Was baptized by an Arian bishop on his deathbed
- Buried in the Church of the Holy Apostles as the "Thirteenth Apostle"



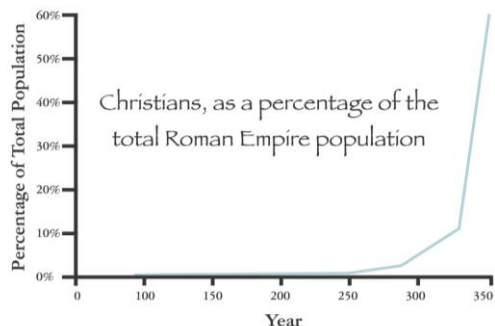
Ruins of Constantine's Palace
Milan, Italy

Number of Christians in the Ancient Church

Year	Christians	% of Pop.
100	7434	—
200	210,516	0.35
250	1,120,246	1.9
300	5,961,000	9.9
312	8,904,032	14.8
350	31,722,489	52.9

Adapted from *Cities of God* by Rodney Stark, p.67.

Christians in the Roman Empire



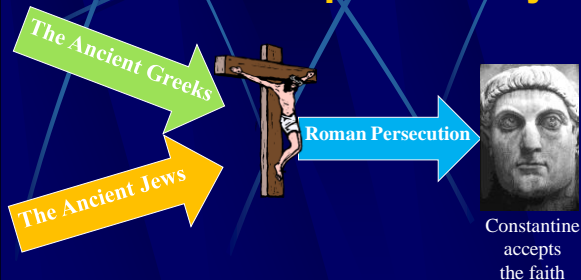
Successors to Constantine

- **Julian the Apostate:** last gasp of paganism (361-363)
 - "You have conquered, o Galilean!"
- **Theodosius:** defender of Nicene orthodoxy (379-395)
 - Outlawed pagan sacrifice
 - Pagan temples torn down
 - The formal end of paganism!



The statue of the Egyptian god Serapis produced a swarm of rats when knocked over at Theodosius' order.

Eusebius' View of History: Christ as the Empire's Destiny



Eusebius' Imperial Theology

- Church and State should be *intertwined*.
- The emperor is God's chosen instrument to reign in God's place on earth.
- Eusebius said, "*The one who is dear to [God] is a kind of spokesman of the divine Word, who summons every race of mankind to a knowledge of the Almighty...The kingdom with which he is invested is an **image** of the heavenly one. He looks up to see the archetypal pattern, and guides those whom he rules below with that pattern.*"