

6.4

The Origins of Christianity



As a Young Historian, I will be able to...

- Understand the diverse religions included in the early Roman empire.
- Describe the development and central ideas of Christianity.
- Summarize the spread of Christianity.
- Outline the development of the early Christian Church.

Rome & Tolerance

Numerous religions were in Rome & Rome tolerated these belief structures. Citizens just had to show loyalty to Roman gods

Cult of Isis- Egyptian region where women were equal to men. **Cult of Mithras**- Good over evil & life after death.

The Jewish faith was a monotheistic faith that absorbed many Greek customs & ideas

Some believed that a **messiah**, anointed king sent by God, would lead them to freedom

The Rise of Christianity

Many followers of the Jewish faith followed a man named **Jesus** which is chronicled in the first 4 books of the **Christian Bible**- Book of the Christian Faith

Born in Bethlehem, he was a prophet who would speak to large crowds about his teachings & word spread of his “miracles.”

Jesus had a group of followers called the **apostles** (person sent forth) to spread his message

Jesus spread the idea of service to others & would die by crucifixion.



Christianity Spreads

Analyze Maps How did the extent of Christianity in A.D. 325 compare to that in A.D. 476?

Christianity Spreads

Apostles & disciples spread Jesus' message after his death

Paul has a vision of Jesus & converts to the new faith & spreads Christianity beyond Jewish communities.

Rome did not tolerate Christians & would often persecute them

Thousands of Christians will become **martyrs, people who suffer & die for their beliefs.**

Christians Win

Despite the attacks on the Christian faith, the message appeals to a large group of the population

The philosophy of the Greeks helps apply the message & spread it across Rome

Emperor Constantine issues the Edict of Milan & allows freedom of Worship in Roman Empire

Emperor Theodosius- Makes Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire

Growth of the Christian Church

To join the faith, one had to be baptized, or blessed with holy water

Women were originally welcome to teach & administer faith until later.

The church would form a **clergy**, people who conduct worship services, & appoint priests & **bishops**, high ranking Church officials

Bishops in major cities became known as **Patriarchs**

The bishop of Rome eventually takes control & becomes **Pope**, father of the Church.

Church Rivals & Teachings

The Church would face many **heresies**, or beliefs said to be contrary to official Church teachings.

Eventually the Church would agree upon the **Nicene Creed**, a statement of basic Christian beliefs

Theology- The study of religious faith & practice

Augustine, a bishop who's writings have greatly influenced Christian thought & philosophy up to the present.