

The Birth of Christianity

Before You Read: Previewing Key Concepts

The Big Idea below is a general historical idea that will be applied to the Mediterranean region in this chapter. Rewrite this idea as a question that can be answered as you read. Here is an example of a question:

How did Christian beliefs challenge Rome?

Watch for the answer(s) to your question as you read the chapter.

Big Ideas About the Birth of Christianity

Government New ideas and beliefs can challenge a government's authority, leading to change.

The Romans were in general tolerant of the religious beliefs of people they ruled. However, they did expect the people to worship the emperor and to allow temples to be built to Roman gods. Jews and Christians were unwilling to do either. This unwillingness caused conflict with Rome.



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BRITAIN

ATLANTIC OCEAN

SPAIN

20°W

MEDITERRANEAN REGION

26–29

Jesus conducts his public ministry.

A.D. 25

70

Romans storm Jerusalem and destroy the Temple complex.

75

120

Roman Empire reaches its height under Hadrian.

125

WORLD

65

Buddhism takes root in China.

100

Moche culture arises in South America. (deer-head figure, Peru) ▶



Spread of Christianity in the Roman Empire, to A.D. 600

INTERACTIVE



180
Reign of Emperor
Marcus Aurelius ends.

313
Emperor Constantine ends
persecution of Christians.
◀ (bust of Constantine)

175

225

275

A.D. 325

220
China's Han Dynasty falls.
(bronze horse, Han Dynasty) ▶

300
Aksum kingdom
emerges in Africa.



The Burning of Rome

Background: Fire! In A.D. 64, wind swept flames across the Circus Maximus, Rome's huge racing arena. Afterward, much of the city lay in ruins. A nasty rumor about Rome's emperor, Nero, began to spread almost as fast as the fire had. People whispered that the unpopular emperor had set the fire so that he could rebuild Rome, including a grand new palace. The emperor said that the unpopular Christians had started the fire. But not all Romans blamed the Christians, as you will read.

Roman coin depicting Nero ▶



The baker is opening his shop near Rome's Christian neighborhood. Every morning, Christians come to buy bread at his bakery. Some Romans hate the Christians because they keep to themselves and refuse to worship the Roman gods. It's true that they don't go to the theater and the races and their men don't join the army. They're also poor, and they wear old clothes. But they're good neighbors and good customers. The Christians the baker knows would never start a fire.

The baker was lucky. His shop still smells smoky, but at least it didn't burn in the fire. As he sets things back in order, he feels sad that his Christian customers suffered so terribly. Because they were unpopular, they were easy for the emperor to blame. To stop people from saying that he set the fire, Nero told everyone it was the fault of the Christians.

The baker has heard that hundreds of Christians who survived the fire died terrible deaths afterward. At Nero's order, many were burned, while others were hanged on crosses or ripped apart by dogs. Nero conducted these executions right in his gardens. The public was invited, but the baker was too disgusted to go.

It's difficult for the baker to understand the Christians' religion. Even so, he doesn't believe any group should suffer such an awful punishment. He wonders whether the Christians who survived will be too afraid to come back to buy his bread.

What do you think will happen to the Christians in Rome?

Reading & Writing

- 1. READING: Character** An important person in a story is a main character. Think about the character of Nero in this story. With a partner, discuss the character of the emperor Nero as revealed in his actions. Then make a list of words to describe the emperor.
- 2. WRITING: Persuasion** Imagine that you have observed Nero's executions of Christians. You know that they didn't set the fire. You want to persuade others to join a revolt against the cruel emperor. Think about the consequences of a revolt. Then make a poster to persuade others to support your cause.

Lesson

1

MAIN IDEAS

- 1 Belief Systems** Christianity built upon the Jewish belief in one God and the concept of a Messiah.
- 2 Belief Systems** The disciples of Jesus came to believe that he was the Messiah.
- 3 Belief Systems** According to the Gospels, Jesus was executed but rose from the dead. Christians believe that this makes freedom from sin and death possible for everyone.

TAKING NOTES

Reading Skill: Explaining Sequence

To sequence events is to put them in an order based on when they happened. As you read Lesson 1, make notes of things that happened in the life of Jesus. Create a time line like this one to sequence the events.



 Skillbuilder Handbook, page R15



▲ **Cross** The cross is a symbol of Christianity. Some crosses are simple objects made of wood. Some are made of gold and adorned with jewels, like the one shown above.

Words to Know

Understanding the following words will help you read this lesson:

moral the lesson taught by a story (page 468)

The moral of Jesus' story about the Good Samaritan is the importance of love.

divine of, from, or like God (page 470)

Some Jews began to believe that Jesus was more than human, possibly even divine.

afterlife an existence or life thought to follow death (page 470)

Christians believe that beyond death there is an afterlife.

The Origins of Christianity

TERMS & NAMES

Jesus
Gospel
disciple
parable
crucifixion
resurrection

Build on What You Know Religion plays an important role in many people's lives, perhaps your own as well as others'. A new religion called Christianity grew out of Jewish beliefs and the ideas of a Jewish teacher named **Jesus**.

Christianity's Jewish Roots

- 1 ESSENTIAL QUESTION** How did Christianity build on Jewish beliefs about the future?

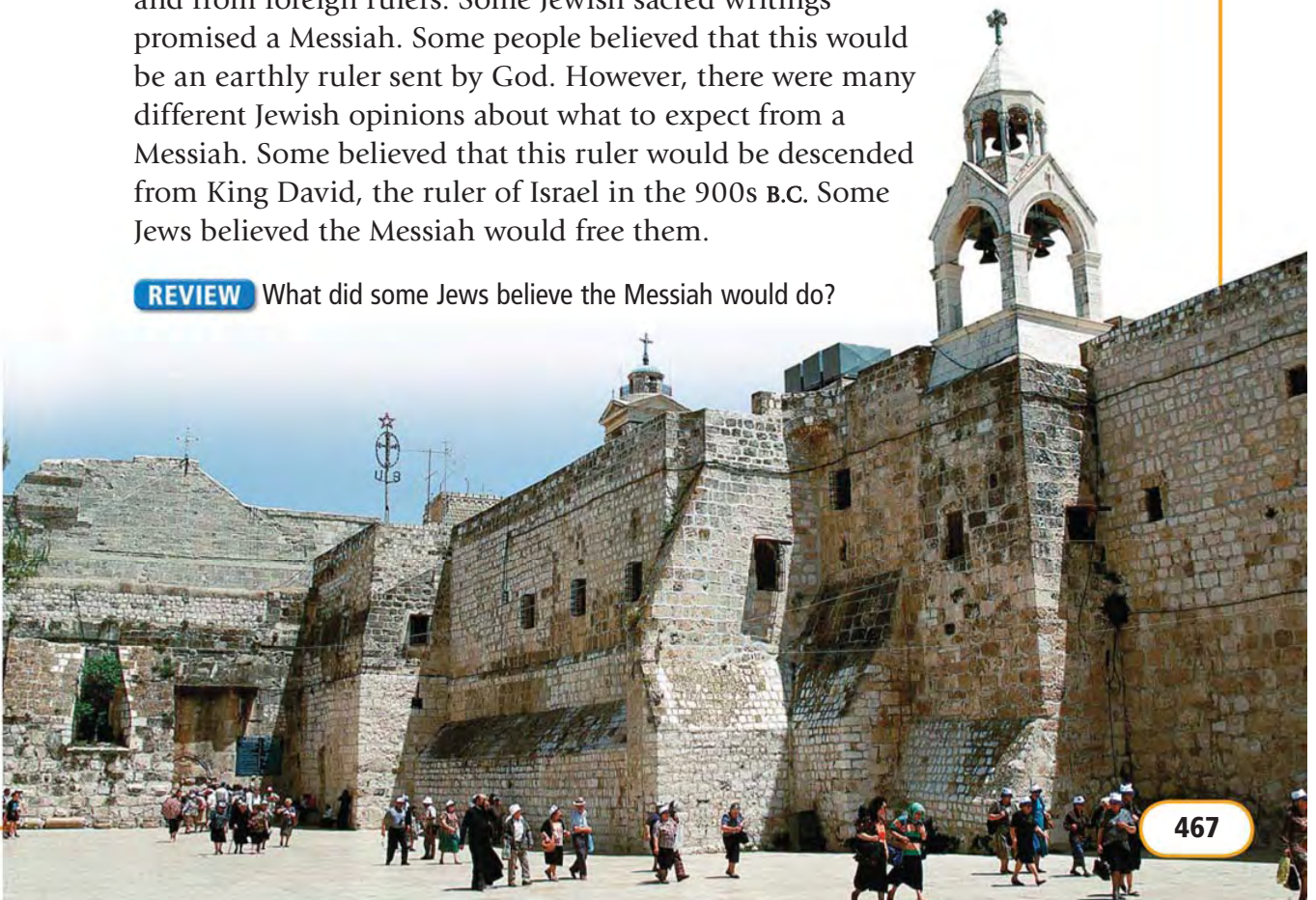
In 63 B.C., the Romans conquered the Jewish kingdom of Judah, also called Judea. Although the Jews had their own kings, these Jewish rulers had to be approved by Rome.

During their history, the Jews had frequently been treated badly. Many wanted to be delivered from oppression and from foreign rulers. Some Jewish sacred writings promised a Messiah. Some people believed that this would be an earthly ruler sent by God. However, there were many different Jewish opinions about what to expect from a Messiah. Some believed that this ruler would be descended from King David, the ruler of Israel in the 900s B.C. Some Jews believed the Messiah would free them.

REVIEW What did some Jews believe the Messiah would do?

Connect to Today

Bethlehem This photograph shows the Church of the Nativity (*below left*) in Bethlehem, supposedly built upon the site of Jesus' birth. The building to the right is a monastery. ▼



The Life of Jesus

2 ESSENTIAL QUESTION Who did the disciples of Jesus believe he was?

As a Jew born in the Roman province of Judea, Jesus followed many of the teachings of Judaism. However, he also taught certain ideas and practices that differed from what others were teaching.

Birth and Early Life We know about Jesus from four accounts called the **Gospels**, written after his death by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. The Gospels and other writings make up the New Testament.

According to the Gospels, Jesus was born in Bethlehem and grew up in Nazareth. Christians would later celebrate his birth on the holiday of Christmas. In the Gospel account, Jesus was raised by Mary and by Joseph, a carpenter.

Jesus' Followers As a young adult, Jesus became a traveling teacher. Biblical accounts say he cured the sick and lame and performed other miracles, such as turning water to wine.

Jesus began to gather followers. His closest followers were called **disciples**. Jesus' 12 disciples were Peter, Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James (son of Alphaeus), Simon, Thaddaeus, and Judas Iscariot.

The Teachings of Jesus Jesus preached justice, compassion, and the coming of God's kingdom. He often delivered these messages in the form of **parables**, or stories with morals. Three of Jesus' best-known parables are those of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, and the Lost Sheep. (See Literature Connection, pages 472–475.)



Vocabulary Strategy

The meaning of the word *disciple* can be figured out by using **context clues**. The rest of the sentence tells you that disciples are close followers. *Disciple* comes from a Latin word meaning “student” or “pupil.”

Jesus' most famous teachings were given in the Sermon on the Mount. The sermon opens with the Beatitudes (bee•AT•ih•TOODZ), or blessings. In this sermon, Jesus encouraged people not only to obey the law but also to change their hearts. People shouldn't simply refrain from killing; they should also love and pray for their enemies. Jesus encouraged his followers to live simply and humbly.

Despite his teachings, Jesus angered some people who heard him preach. For example, Jesus forgave people who had broken religious laws, but many Jewish leaders thought only God could grant this kind of forgiveness. Jesus also associated with sinners, whom religious leaders treated as outcasts. Most shocking was the claim of some of Jesus' followers that he was the Messiah they had long been waiting for.

REVIEW What form did Jesus' teachings often take?

Primary Source

Background: One of Jesus' most famous sermons is called the Sermon on the Mount. In this speech, he made a number of memorable statements that have become known as the Beatitudes. Some of them are at right. Below is the Sermon on the Mount as pictured in a French manuscript of the 1200s.



from *the Beatitudes*

- Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
- Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
- Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.
- Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
- Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
- Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Matthew 5:3–9

DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

What do these sayings of Jesus suggest about his view of the oppressed? Does he seem to identify with the rich and powerful or the poor and weak?

The Death of Jesus

3 **ESSENTIAL QUESTION** What belief about Jesus did Christians think made an afterlife possible?

The claim that Jesus was the Messiah, or Jewish liberator and ruler, threatened the Romans because it questioned their political power and authority. The claim also shocked many Jewish leaders.

Arrest and Trial According to three of the Gospels, Jesus' followers hailed him as king when he journeyed to Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish holy day of Passover. In that city's holy Temple, Jesus publicly criticized how the Temple was being run. Jesus was arrested and turned over to the Romans for punishment.

The Story of the Resurrection The Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, ordered Jesus to be executed by **crucifixion**, or hanging on a cross until he suffocated. After Jesus died, a huge stone was placed in front of the tomb where he was buried.

On the third day after his execution, according to the Gospels, some of his followers reported that the stone had moved and the tomb lay empty. Others said they had seen Jesus and had even walked and talked with him.

These accounts of Jesus' **resurrection**, or return to life, proved to many of his followers that he was divine. They came to believe that Jesus had been willing to give up his own life for the sake of God's kingdom. Through his death and resurrection, God was bringing new life into the world. This was a world in which sin would no longer prevail and even death would be defeated. Jesus' followers said anyone who believed this would share in the life of God.



▲ **Tomb** This burial chamber dating from the time of Jesus was sealed with a round stone.

According to Christians, Jesus' crucifixion took place on a Friday, and his resurrection on a Sunday. The Christian holidays Good Friday and Easter Sunday, which recall these two events, have been celebrated ever since.

REVIEW What event made Jesus' followers believe their leader was divine?

Lesson Summary

- Some Jews believed a Messiah would give them political power and religious freedom.
- Jesus' teachings stressed compassion, justice, and the coming of God's kingdom.
- Accounts of Jesus' resurrection made some people believe Jesus was divine.



▲ **Relief Sculpture**
The fish is a Christian symbol dating from ancient times. This fourth-century fish with a cross is from a Christian cemetery in Egypt.

Why It Matters Now . . .

Jesus and his earliest followers were Jewish. Eventually, however, more and more non-Jews converted to Christianity. Today about a third of the people in the world are Christians.

1 Lesson Review

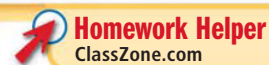
Terms & Names

1. Explain the importance of
Jesus disciple crucifixion
Gospel parable resurrection

Using Your Notes

Explaining Sequence Use your completed graphic to answer the following question:

2. What actions of Jesus in Jerusalem preceded his arrest?



Main Ideas

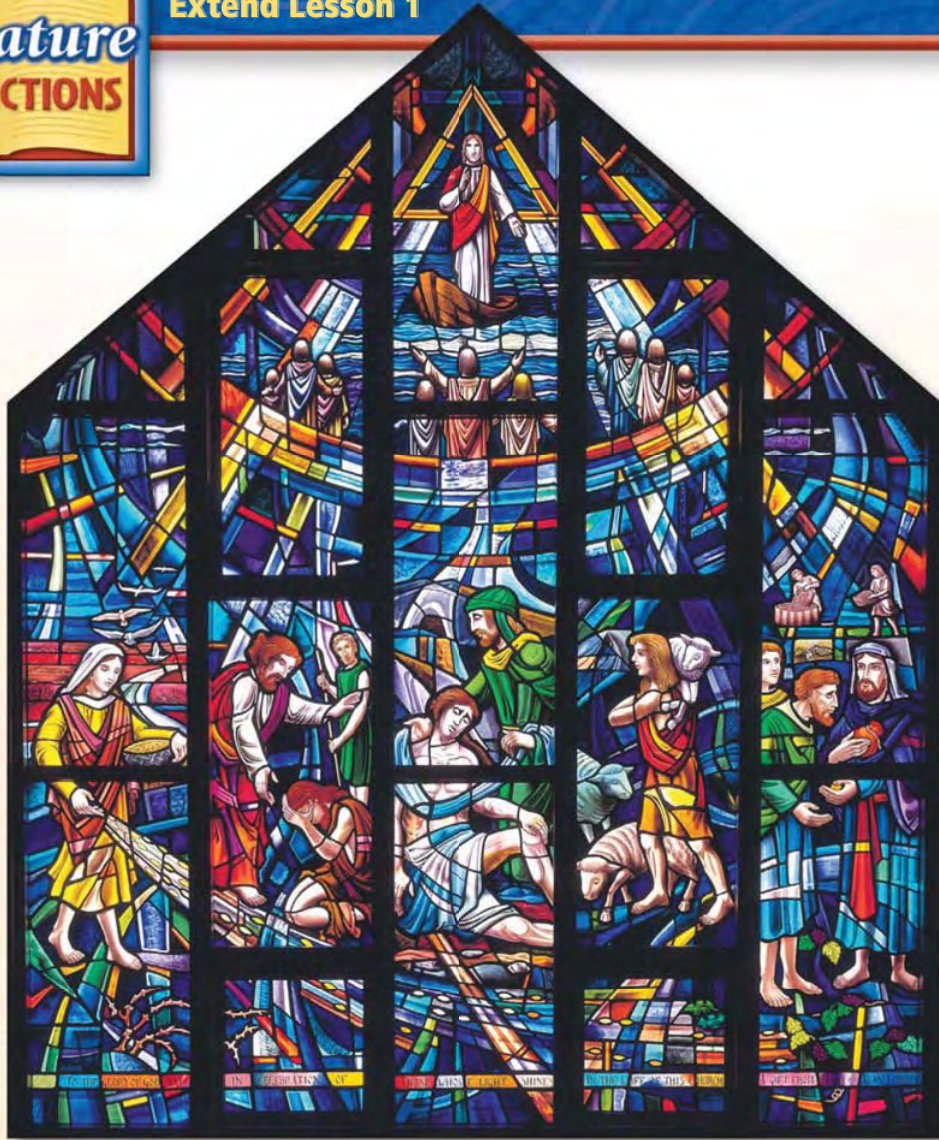
3. What great power ruled over Judea in the time of Jesus? (See map on page 463.)
4. How do we know about Jesus' life and about his teachings?
5. What did accounts of Jesus' resurrection prove to his followers?

Critical Thinking

6. **Determining Historical Context** What historical conditions made some Jews in Judea likely to accept Jesus as their Messiah?
7. **Drawing Conclusions** Why might Jesus have used parables to deliver his message?

Activity

Writing a Parable Think of an important lesson you would like to teach. Then write a brief story to teach your lesson. Read your parable aloud to your class.



Two Parables of Jesus

Background: Jesus was a teacher. He often taught by telling parables, or stories that teach lessons. His teachings were based upon ideas from the Jewish tradition. Two of his most famous parables are those of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. The latter deals with God's call for the lost soul to repent. The version of the Prodigal Son is taken from *Everlasting Stories* by Lois Rock. (See page R58 in the Primary Source Handbook for the Parable of the Lost Sheep.)

The Good Samaritan

The scene Jesus uses for his parable is the rocky road from Jerusalem to Jericho. This trade route was dangerous and narrow, with sudden sharp curves that made it a favorite place for thieves. Also, the road dropped more than 3,400 feet in elevation in 17 miles. Jerusalem is 2,300 feet above sea level. Jericho is near the Dead Sea, which is 1,300 feet below sea level and the lowest place on Earth.

One day, as Jesus was talking with his disciples, a man stood up and approached him respectfully. “Teacher, I have a burning question to ask,” he said. “What must I do to have everlasting life?”

“What do the scriptures say?” Jesus asked him in return. “What do you think they mean?”

The man was quick to reply: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind’ and, ‘Love your neighbor as you love yourself.’”

“That’s right,” said Jesus. “Do this and you will live.”

The man wanted to know more, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

Jesus began a parable, one of the stories he was famous for when sharing his teachings. “Once there was a man on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho. Bandits attacked him. They beat him up, took his valuables, and left him there half dead.”

Those listening to the parable thought what a fool the man must have been to travel alone on that dangerous road. Beaten, robbed of all he had. The poor man.

Jesus went on, “And by chance a man was going down that road. He saw the injured fellow, but walked by on the other side of the road.”

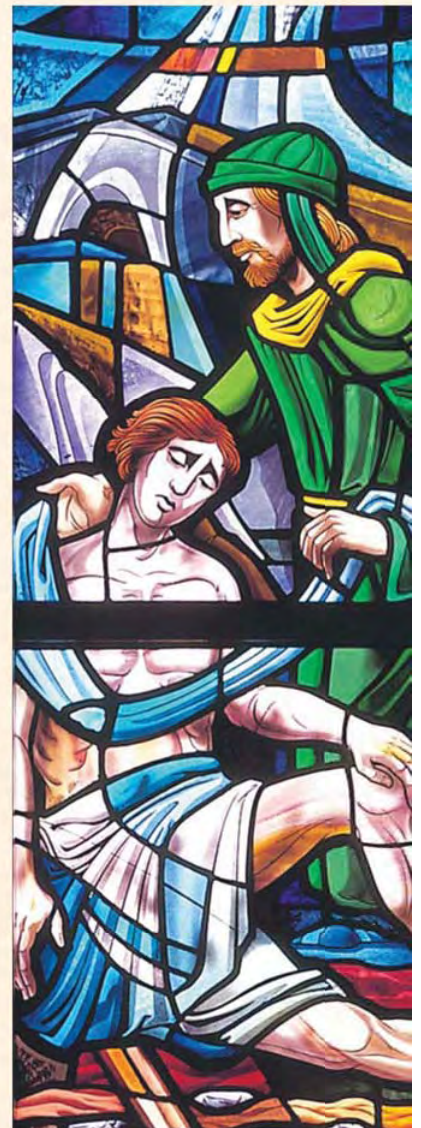
“Next,” said Jesus, “came another traveler. This person went over to look, then hurried away.”

His listeners knew what was coming. There would be at least one more traveler—good parables needed someone who was different from the rest.

“A Samaritan who was traveling passed that way, . . .” A few in the crowd caught their breath. A stranger all the way from Samaria wouldn’t be expected to help.

“He saw the man and had pity on him. He cleaned and bandaged his wounds, and then lifted him onto his own donkey. They went

The Good Samaritan The Samaritan helps the wounded traveler in this detail of a stained glass window. ▼



together down the steep road until they came to an inn. That night, the Samaritan cared for him, and when he left the next morning, he paid the innkeeper two days' wages. "Take care of him," he said to the innkeeper, "and whatever more I owe you, I will pay on my way back."

Jesus asked, "What do you think? Which of the three was a neighbor to the man attacked by robbers?"

"The one who treated him kindly," replied the questioner.

Jesus said, "Go and do the same."

REVIEW Who treated the crime victim best?

The Prodigal Son

Jesus told this story:

"There was once a man who had two sons. They worked together on the land and made a good living. As he grew up, the younger son began to dream of what he would do if he had his father's riches, and then he made a plan.

"Father," he announced one day, "when you die, I will inherit some of your wealth. I want to have it now, while I am young."

"My dear son, I fear you are making a mistake," pleaded the father. But it was no use. Sorrowfully, his father divided his property between his two sons.

"Within days, the son sold it and set off for a country far away. There he found much on which to spend his money, with extravagant lodgings and stylish clothes and rich food. Friends gathered around him, eager to come to his parties. He was delighted. But his money soon dwindled away.

"Then, out of nowhere, famine struck the land and the price of everything soared. With nothing left to sell, the young man became desperate.

"He found himself a job . . . but it was of the very worst kind, looking after pigs. He carried a basketful of bean pods to the field they had

The Prodigal Son The father welcomes his returning son in this detail of a stained glass window. ▼



rooted into dust and tipped the food on the ground in front of them. I wish I could eat bean pods, he thought, as he watched them munching. No one gives me anything.

“He began to think of the family farm and the servants who had looked after the flocks. ‘They always had more than enough to eat,’ he remembered. Then he lifted his head. ‘I shall go back to my father,’ he said, ‘and admit that I have done wrong.’

“So he made the long journey home. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him. He ran to greet him and kissed him. The son hung his head. ‘Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am no longer fit to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired workers.’

“His father simply waved his hand. ‘Hurry!’ he called to the servants. ‘Bring a robe for my son, a ring for his finger, and shoes for his feet. Then let us prepare a feast.’

“So it was done. The party began, and the elder son returned from the fields to hear music and dancing. ‘What’s going on?’ he asked a servant.

“‘Your brother has come back,’ he was told. ‘Your father has prepared a feast to celebrate.’

“At that, the elder brother grew so angry he would not even go into the house. His father came out to welcome him in.

“‘I have worked for you all these years and yet you have done nothing for me!’ the son complained.

“The father replied, ‘You are always here with me, and everything I have is yours. But we had to celebrate and be happy—your brother was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now he has been found.’”

P Primary Source Handbook

See the excerpt from the New Testament: Parable of the Lost Sheep, page R58.

REVIEW Why was the older brother angry?

Reading & Writing

- 1. READING: Theme** In which of these parables does the theme of forgiveness seem important?
- 2. WRITING: Narration** Imagine that you are the elder son in the Parable of the Prodigal Son. Write a narrative of your brother’s return, in which you explain your point of view.

Lesson

2

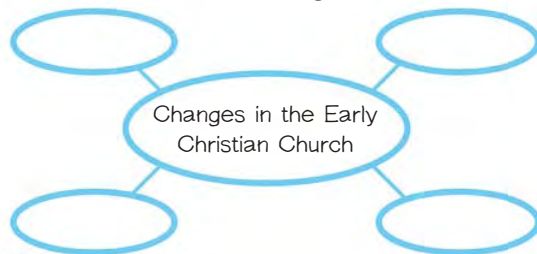
MAIN IDEAS


- 1 Belief Systems** The disciples of Jesus spread his teachings and tried to convince others to believe in him.
- 2 Belief Systems** According to the Christian scriptures, after having a vision of Jesus, Paul became a leader of the Christian movement.
- 3 Geography** Paul traveled to many of the great cities of the Roman Empire, seeking to convert people to Christianity.

TAKING NOTES

Reading Skill: Finding Main Ideas

Finding the main idea—the most important point—of a passage will increase your understanding of the material. This lesson discusses the changes in the early Christian Church. Record details about this main idea in a web diagram.



 Skillbuilder Handbook, page R2



▲ Communion Cup This Russian chalice of gold and precious stones was made in 1598.

Words to Know

Understanding the following words will help you read this lesson:

charity the giving of money or help to people who are poor (page 477)

*Many Jews and Christians feel that their religions call on them to practice **charity**.*

debate a discussion of opposing opinions; argument (page 478)

*Early Christians had many **debates** about the principles of their new religion.*

astonishment sudden great surprise or wonder (page 478)

*The **astonishment** he experienced led him to make important changes in his life.*

The Early Christians

TERMS & NAMES

Gentile
persecute
Paul
missionary
Epistle

Build on What You Know In Chapter 13 you learned that the Romans worshiped many gods. In contrast, the Jews worshiped one God and tried to obey God’s law. The first Christians also obeyed the law of Moses.

Jesus’ Disciples

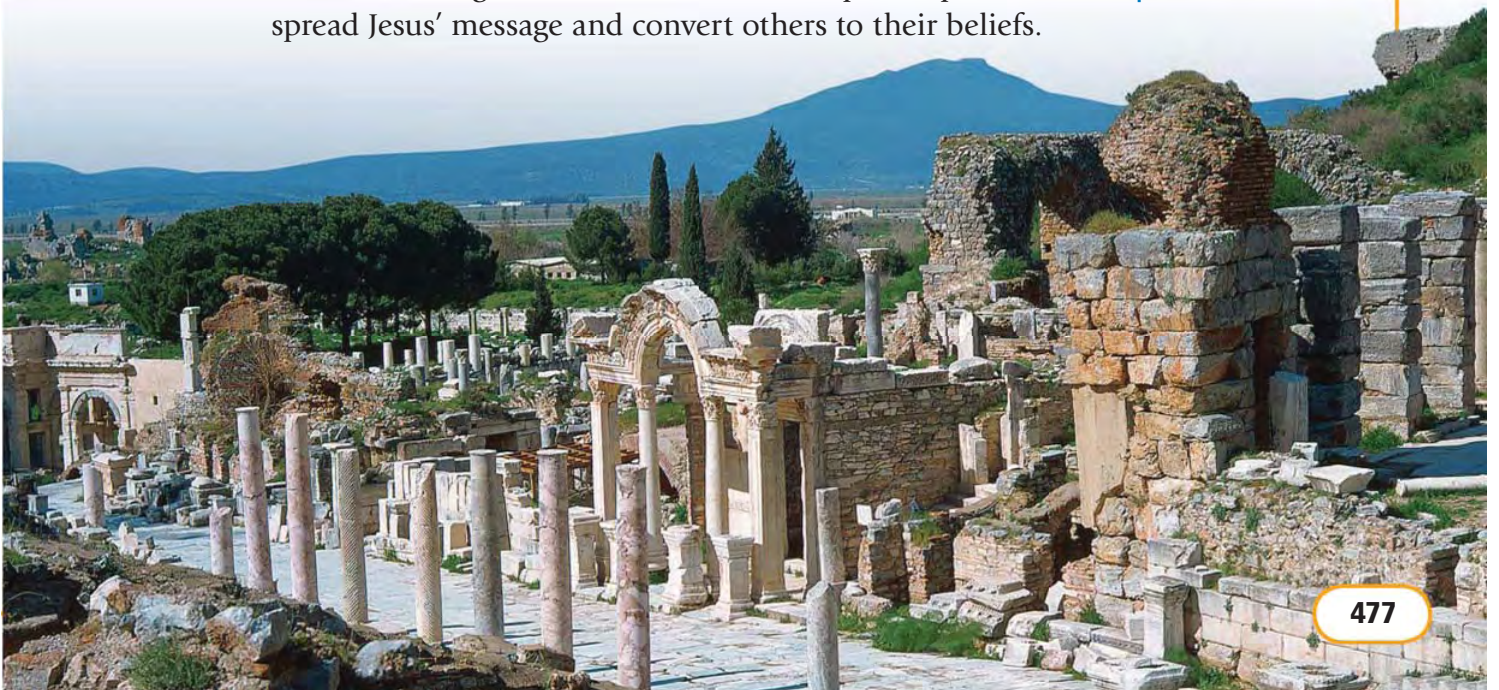
1 ESSENTIAL QUESTION What did Jesus’ disciples do after his death?

Jesus’ first disciples were Jews. Eventually, they developed beliefs and practices that would cause a break from Judaism and became known as Christians.

The Early Church The disciples thought that Jesus had fulfilled Jewish prophecies about the Messiah. The disciples tried to convince other Jews to accept Jesus as the Messiah.

The early church stressed sharing property as well as practicing charity, helping prisoners, and taking common meals. Women and slaves were eager to join, perhaps because the new church taught that all its members were equal. These beliefs helped to set the early church apart from other religions of the time. The disciples hoped to spread Jesus’ message and convert others to their beliefs.

Ephesus This view shows the ruins of a street and temple in the Roman city of Ephesus in Anatolia, where early Christians preached. ▼



Conflict Arises The first members of Christian churches were Jewish converts to Christianity. The conversion of **Gentiles** (JEHN•TYLZ), or non-Jews, to Christianity sparked a debate. Some thought Gentiles should observe the Torah, while others thought that this was unnecessary.

At first, Roman leaders ignored the early Christians. Like the Christians themselves, the Romans viewed Christianity as a sect, or division, of Judaism. Jewish leaders disagreed with this view.

REVIEW On what beliefs was the early Christian church based?

The Conversion of Saul

2 ESSENTIAL QUESTION What change did Saul undergo?

One of the men who became an early leader of the Christian church was Saul, who had been born a Jew. Later he wrote about how his faith changed and how, as a young man, he had actively opposed the Christian church.

The Road to Damascus While on the road to Damascus, Saul experienced a sudden conversion. According to his own account, Saul felt that God had revealed Jesus as His son to him, and appointed him to proclaim Jesus among the Gentiles. Saul came to believe that Jesus was the Jewish Messiah.

Christianity's Early Years, c. 4 B.C.–A.D. 380

c. 4 B.C. ▶
Jesus is born.



A.D. 26–29
Jesus teaches
in Judea.



c. 29
Jesus is crucified.

▲ **40s–50s**
Paul's journeys
spread Christianity.

10 B.C.

A.D. 5

20

35

50

Saul Becomes a Christian When Saul reached Damascus, he sought out members of the church and joined them. There he studied his new faith and began to convert Gentiles.

Saul's cultural and political background helped him convert a variety of nonbelievers. As a Pharisee, Saul knew Jewish law. He had been born in Tarsus, a city in Asia Minor heavily influenced by Greek culture. Saul held Roman citizenship. This allowed him to travel freely through the empire.

When he traveled, Saul used his Roman name, **Paul**. After three years, according to Christian scriptures, Paul was ready to travel as a **missionary**, or person who spreads his faith by converting others to his religion.

REVIEW What happened to Saul on the road to Damascus?

Paul's Journeys Spread Christianity

3 ESSENTIAL QUESTION Where did Paul travel, and why?

During Paul's lifetime, the Roman Empire was experiencing the Pax Romana, or "Roman peace." That made the empire's excellent roads safer for Paul's widespread travels.

The Journeys Nonetheless, Paul's travels weren't easy. He made four missionary journeys. Each one took several years. Paul wrote that he faced "dangers from rivers, dangers from bandits, . . . dangers in the wilderness, dangers at sea."



64
Roman persecution of Christians begins under Nero.

▲ 70s–90s
Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are written.

313 ▶
Roman emperor Constantine grants Christians freedom of worship.

380
Emperor Theodosius makes Christianity Rome's official religion.



65

80

95

400

Changes to Christianity

Paul and other Christian missionaries brought about changes that made it possible for Christianity to spread throughout the Roman Empire. For years, Paul and other early Christian leaders struggled over whether Gentiles had to become Jews before becoming Christians. Paul argued that conversion to Judaism was unnecessary. Paul's idea helped separate Christianity from Judaism. It also made the new religion more appealing to Gentiles. As a result, Christianity began to spread throughout the empire.



▲ Paul The apostle Paul was the most important early Christian missionary.

The Letters Almost everywhere Paul went, he started new churches. He kept in touch with these churches by writing letters, delivered by other missionaries. Paul's letters explained Christian beliefs and urged converts to live according to God's laws. He preached that salvation was available to all people if they accepted Jesus.

Paul's letters became an important part of the New Testament. They are among the **Epistles** ("letters"). In one famous Epistle, Paul wrote that believing in Jesus broke down all barriers between people: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Paul's Death Paul had wanted to travel to Rome to speak before the emperor and spread his Christian faith. He did reach Rome, but not in the way he had hoped.

Near the end of his career, Paul returned to Jerusalem. He was taken into custody by the Romans when it was rumored that he had brought Gentiles into the Temple. After staying in prison for two years, Paul demanded to be tried before Caesar in Rome.

According to some who endeavor to reconstruct the history of early Christianity, Paul left on his final journey in late autumn A.D. 59. After arriving in Rome in early A.D. 60, Paul remained under house arrest for two years. He wrote several letters from captivity. Then, he suddenly stopped. Paul probably died in Rome, possibly after being **persecuted**—that is, opposed or harassed—by the Emperor Nero.

The Legacy of Paul Paul was the most influential of the early apostles, or messengers of Jesus, because of his many journeys and letters. He helped spread the church from Jesus' homeland out to the nations of the world.

REVIEW How did Paul change Christianity?

Lesson Summary

- Jesus' disciples tried to persuade other Jews and debated whether to seek Gentile converts.
- Saul became the most important early Christian missionary.
- Paul's conversion of Gentiles established Christianity as a new faith.



▲ Relief Sculpture
This Roman sailing ship of the first century A.D. was the kind of ship in which Paul would have made many of his journeys.

Why It Matters Now . . .

More than any other person, Paul contributed to the growth of Christianity as a worldwide religion. All over the world, many churches and cities are named in his honor.

2 Lesson Review

Terms & Names

1. Explain the importance of
Gentile Paul Epistle
persecute missionary

Using Your Notes

Finding Main Ideas Use your completed diagram to answer the following question:

2. How did the Christian church change during Paul's lifetime?



Activity

Internet Activity Use the Internet to research Paul's journeys and make a thematic map of them. Use illustrations or symbols to show some things that happened to him.

INTERNET KEYWORD: *Paul's missionary journeys*



Homework Helper
ClassZone.com

Main Ideas

3. Why were women and slaves particularly eager to become Christians?
4. What qualifications did Paul possess that made him an effective missionary?
5. What decision made Christianity appealing to Gentile converts?

Critical Thinking

6. **Understanding Cause and Effect** How did the Pax Romana contribute to the spread of Christianity?
7. **Assessing Credibility of Sources** Why are the Epistles useful sources for learning about Paul's experiences?

Lesson

3

MAIN IDEAS

- 1 Government** Rome became hostile to Jews and Christians because both groups challenged Roman authority.
- 2 Government** The Roman emperor Constantine accepted Christianity and ended persecutions.
- 3 Government** The church developed into a complex institution with many levels of authority.

TAKING NOTES

Reading Skill: Finding Main Ideas

Finding the main idea—the most important point—of a passage will increase your understanding. This lesson discusses ways in which Rome’s attitude toward Christianity changed. Record details about this main idea in a web diagram.



 Skillbuilder Handbook, page R2



▲ **Bronze Statue** The Roman emperor Valentinian holds aloft a Christian cross, showing the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity.

Words to Know

Understanding the following words will help you read this lesson:

alien of or coming from another country; foreign (page 483)

*Some Roman leaders believed that **alien** religious beliefs might weaken their authority.*

waging conducting or carrying on (page 484)

*Constantine was **waging** a war for control of the Roman Empire.*

edict a statement by a ruler that has the force of law (page 484)

*The Roman emperor issued an **edict** that legalized Christianity.*

communion a ritual in which Christians remember Jesus by eating bread and drinking wine (page 486)

*Christians have different beliefs about the meaning and significance of **communion**.*

Rome and Christianity

TERMS & NAMES

bishop
pop
catholic
creed
Trinity

Build on What You Know In Chapter 13, you learned that the Roman religion included elements drawn from the religions of other peoples. An important issue facing the ancient world was how Rome would react to the new religion of Christianity.

Rome's Policy Toward Other Religions

1 ESSENTIAL QUESTION Why was Rome hostile to Christians and Jews?

Rome tolerated the alien religious practices of the people it conquered. It exempted Jews from the requirement to worship Roman gods, including the emperor. However, Rome would not let the religions of subject peoples inspire rebellion. When a Jewish revolt began in Jerusalem, the Romans destroyed the Temple.

A Christian Threat As more Gentiles joined the Christian movement, the Romans became alarmed. Some Gentiles claimed that they should not have to worship the emperor. The appeal of Christianity to slaves and women also caused alarm. Finally, Christian talk about a Lord who would establish a kingdom seemed to imply an end to the Roman Empire.

Connect to Today

Rome This view shows the Sant'Angelo Bridge over the Tiber River at dusk, with St. Peter's Basilica in the background. ▼

INTERACTIVE



The Roman Persecutions Roman doubts about Christianity soon led to active hostility. Nero blamed the Christians for a fire that leveled much of Rome in A.D. 64. Many Christians were tortured and killed because of their religion. Yet the conversions continued. During the Roman persecutions, catacombs—underground cemeteries with secret passages—provided a hiding place for Christians. However, a key event would bring the persecutions to an end.

REVIEW Why did the Romans feel threatened by Christianity?

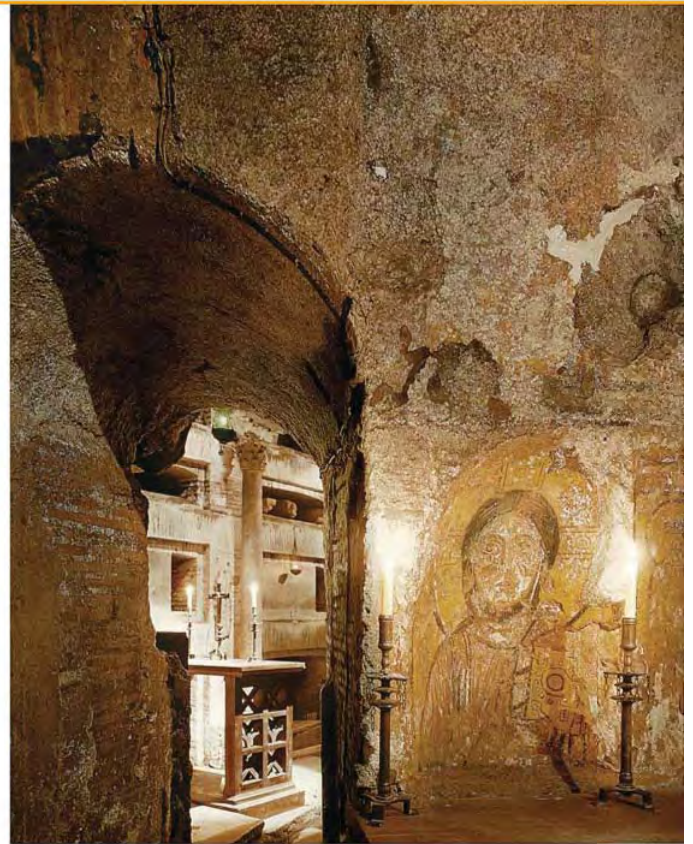
The Conversion of Constantine

2 ESSENTIAL QUESTION What was Constantine's policy toward Christianity?

In A.D. 306, Constantine (KAHN•stuhn•TEEN) became the Roman emperor. Like those before him, he had allowed the persecution of Christians. In 312, however, he was waging a battle for leadership of Rome.

The Cross as Sign In the midst of the fighting, Constantine prayed for help. Later he reported seeing a Christian cross in the sky along with these words: "In this sign you will conquer." He ordered his soldiers to put the symbol of the cross on their shields and battle flags. Constantine and his troops were victorious.

The Legalization of Christianity The victorious Constantine immediately ended the persecution of Christians. Then, in the Edict of Milan, he made Christianity one of the empire's legal religions and returned property that had been seized during the persecutions. Constantine also built churches, used Christian symbols on coins, and made Sunday a holy day of rest and worship. But Rome's first Christian emperor delayed his own baptism, or formal conversion, until the end of his life.



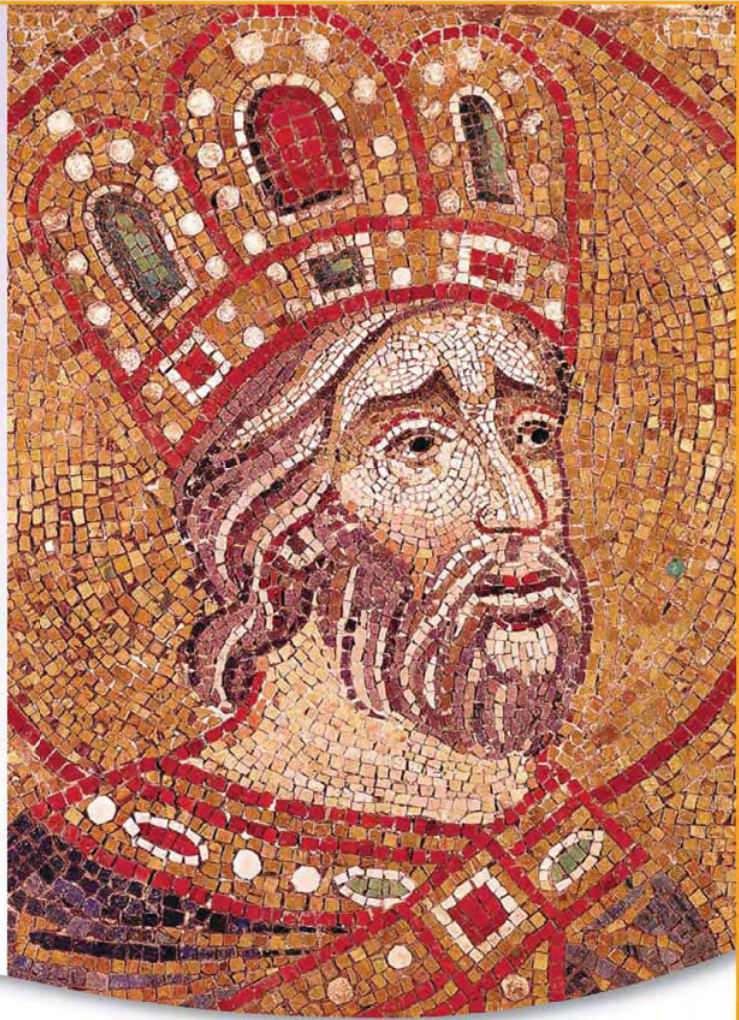
▲ Catacomb This picture of a catacomb in Rome shows burial niches and a painting of Jesus.

History Makers

Constantine

Constantine was a fierce and successful warrior. He was also a serious student of his new religion. The emperor wrote a special prayer for his troops, and he even traveled with a movable chapel in a tent. Constantine decreed the building of many Christian churches in the Roman Empire.

Constantine established Constantinople (now Istanbul, Turkey) as a new capital. It was a center of Christianity for the next thousand years. He was buried in Constantinople's Church of the Apostles in A.D. 337. Memorials to the 12 apostles surrounded Constantine's tomb. The first Christian emperor considered himself to be Jesus' 13th apostle.



Christianity Changes Rome In 380, Emperor Theodosius decreed Christianity Rome's official religion. Eleven years later, Theodosius closed down all the pagan temples. "All the peoples we rule," he said, "shall practice that religion that Peter the Apostle transmitted to the Romans."

REVIEW What did the Edict of Milan decree?

Beginnings of the Roman Catholic Church

3 ESSENTIAL QUESTION What were some of the beliefs of the early church?

The practice of Christianity in Roman cities took on a common structure. Priests and deacons obeyed **bishops**, or local church leaders. Roman Catholic tradition says that Rome's first bishop was the apostle Peter. Much later, Rome's bishop gradually became the most important bishop, or **pope**. This was the beginning of the Roman Catholic Church. **Catholic** means "universal."

Beliefs and Practices Some early Christian writers, called church fathers, developed a **creed**, or statement of beliefs. This creed featured a belief in the **Trinity**, or union of three divine persons—Father, Son (Jesus), and Holy Spirit—in one God. A church father from North Africa, Augustine, wrote about a God who was present everywhere. The church also developed sacraments—religious rites—such as baptism and communion, based on events in the life of Jesus.

To live the ideal Christian life and to celebrate these sacraments together, Christian men and women formed communities called monasteries. As the church grew, men entered the higher orders of the church, becoming bishops, priests, and deacons. Christianity changed from a small sect to a powerful, wealthy religion.

REVIEW What is Rome’s bishop called?

Lesson Summary

- Rome saw the new religion of Christianity as a threat.
- Constantine embraced Christianity in A.D. 312.
- The Roman Catholic Church traces its roots to the apostle Peter.

Why It Matters Now . . .

One-third of the people in the world today are Christian.

3 Lesson Review



Terms & Names

1. Explain the importance of
bishop catholic Trinity
pope creed

Using Your Notes

Finding Main Ideas Use your completed diagram to answer the following question:

2. What decision made by Theodosius had a big impact on Roman religion?



Main Ideas

3. How did the Romans view Christianity at first?
4. What effect did the Edict of Milan have?
5. What three persons are said to make up the Trinity?

Critical Thinking

6. **Understanding Cause and Effect** What effect did Emperor Constantine have on the spread of Christianity?
7. **Making Inferences** Why do you think the bishop of Rome became the most important of all the bishops?

Activity

Making a Time Line Chart the important events in the early history of the church on a time line. Be sure to include the sources for your dates.

Make a World-Religions Pie Graph

Goal: To understand the sizes of the major religions of the world

Prepare

- 1 Gather resources, such as world almanacs, encyclopedias, and books from the library.
- 2 Make a list of religions you find in these resources.

Do the Activity

- 1 Use the resources you've identified to find out the numbers of members of the major religions of the world. Major religions you might research include the following: Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. You might also have categories "Other" (for members of all the many other religions in the world) and "Nonreligious" (for residents of officially atheistic countries, such as China).
- 2 Construct a pie graph showing the size of each religion. The bigger the percentage of believers, the bigger the slice of the graph.
- 3 Choose a color for each religion or category, and color in each slice of the graph.

Follow-Up

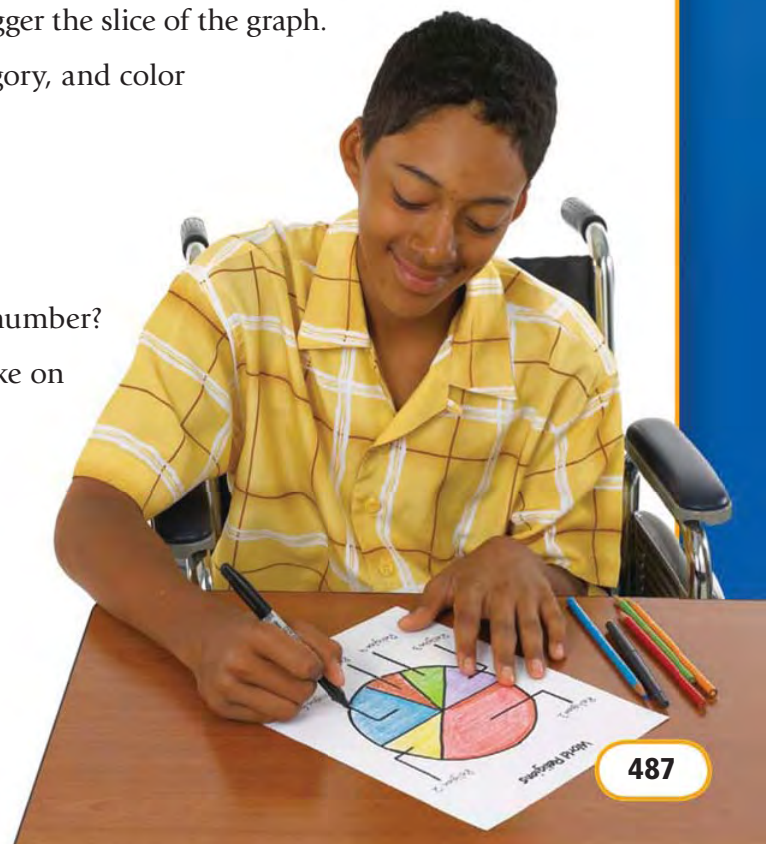
- 1 Which religion has the most members?
- 2 Which religion has the second greatest number?
- 3 What other generalizations can you make on the basis of the graph?

Extension

Making a Presentation Display your completed pie graph in the classroom.

Materials & Supplies

- blank sheet of paper
- markers or crayons of different colors
- a ruler to draw lines for sections of the pie graph
- research sources, such as world almanacs or encyclopedias



Chapter 14 Review

VISUAL SUMMARY

The Birth of Christianity

Belief Systems

- Christianity built upon Jewish beliefs.
- The disciples of Jesus believed that he was the Messiah.
- Christians believe that Jesus rose from the dead and that this made an afterlife possible.
- Jesus' disciples and, later, other apostles like Paul spread the teachings of Jesus.



Geography

- Paul traveled around the eastern Roman Empire trying to convince Gentiles to believe in Jesus.



Government

- Jews and Christians challenged the authority of Rome.
- Constantine converted to Christianity and made it one of the official religions of the empire.
- The Christian church developed into a complex institution.



TERMS & NAMES

Explain why the words in each pair below are linked with each other.

1. **Gospel** and **disciple**
2. **Paul** and **missionary**
3. **bishop** and **pope**

MAIN IDEAS

The Origins of Christianity (pages 466–475)

4. What is one important message from the Sermon on the Mount?
5. What events do the Christian holidays of Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday commemorate?

The Early Christians (pages 476–481)

6. What religion did Jesus and his earliest disciples follow?
7. What early decision helped attract Gentile converts to Christianity and separate it from Judaism?

Rome and Christianity (pages 482–487)

8. What happened to the Temple in Jerusalem in A.D. 70?
9. What are two examples of Christian sacraments?

CRITICAL THINKING

Big Ideas: Government

10. **MAKING INFERENCES** What beliefs did Jesus preach that might have brought him into conflict with Rome?
11. **DRAWING CONCLUSIONS** Why might Christians have been blamed by the Roman authorities for the fire that destroyed Rome in A.D. 64?
12. **SUMMARIZING** How did the emperor Constantine help spread Christianity?

ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT

1. WRITING ACTIVITY Imagine that you were a reporter present at the Sermon on the Mount or one of the other events described in this chapter. Explain to your readers what you have seen. Describe the people present, the words spoken, and the meaning of the event. Remember the questions of the newspaper reporter as you write up your account:

- Who?
- When?
- What?
- How?
- Where?
- Why?

2. INTERDISCIPLINARY ACTIVITY—GEOGRAPHY Research how many miles Paul traveled on his various journeys. Describe the dangers he faced in various places. What dangers might a modern traveler face on the same routes? Using maps, make a brief oral report about your findings.

3. STARTING WITH A STORY



Review the poster you made about replacing Nero. Research what happened to Nero, and write the headline and first paragraph of a news story explaining his overthrow.

Technology Activity

4. CREATING A MULTIMEDIA PRESENTATION

Use the Internet or library to research the sayings of Jesus and other religious leaders. Create a multimedia presentation in which you compare and contrast these sayings. Include

- sayings of Buddha and Confucius
- images of the religious leaders
- a comparison chart
- text for each slide
- documentation of your sources



Research Links
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Reading Charts Latin was the language of the western Roman Empire and the Roman Catholic Church. Use the chart below to answer the questions.

The Influence of Latin

Latin Word	Meaning	Related Words in English
pontifex	high priest	pontiff
dominus	lord	domain, dominion
senatus	supreme council of state	senate, senator
provincia	governed territory	province
legio	body of soldiers	legion, legionnaire
Caesar	emperor, prince	kaiser, czar
episcopus	overseer	episcopal, bishop
cardinalis	principal, pivotal	cardinal
sedes	seat	Holy See
catholicus	universal	catholic

1. What two elements in the Roman world do the Latin words in the chart apply to?

- A. Temple in Jerusalem and Roman Forum
- B. Roman army and roads
- C. Roman government and the Roman Catholic Church
- D. capitals of Rome and Constantinople

2. What sorts of activities do the Latin words in the chart relate to?

- A. sports and athletic competition
- B. music and entertainment
- C. government and authority
- D. business and commerce



Test Practice
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Additional Test Practice, pp. S1–S33