

Revelation 2:12-17 Pergamos & The Compromising Church

Church History AD 313-590

*Church History Timeline

Church Councils

Council of Nicaea (AD 325)

- Condemned Arianism (which denied Christ's full divinity).
- Affirmed that Christ is "of one substance" (homoousios) with the Father.
- Produced the first form of the Nicene Creed.

Council of Constantinople (AD 381)

- Reaffirmed Nicaea against renewed Arianism.
- Declared the Holy Spirit fully divine, completing the doctrine of the Trinity.
- Revised and expanded the Nicene Creed.

Council of Ephesus (AD 431)

- Condemned Nestorianism (which separated Christ's divine and human persons).
- Affirmed Mary as Theotokos ("God-bearer"), mother of the one divine Person, Christ.
- Rejected any division of Christ into "two sons."

Council of Chalcedon (AD 451)

- Condemned Eutychianism/Monophysitism (which fused Christ's natures into one).
- Affirmed Christ as one Person in two natures, fully God and fully man.
- Established the Chalcedonian Definition, a cornerstone of orthodox Christology.

Second Council of Constantinople (AD 553)

- Sought to reconcile Chalcedonian and non-Chalcedonian Christians.
- Condemned the "Three Chapters" (writings seen as Nestorian).
- Reasserted the authority of Chalcedon while emphasizing unity of Christ's person.

*Council Meme

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Roman History

AD 293 Emperor Diocletian sets up The Tetrarchy:

- Augusti = "senior emperors"
- Diocletian in the East, based at Nicomedia
- Maximian in the West, based at Milan
- Caesars = "junior emperors"
- Galerius under Diocletian in the East
- Constantius Chlorus under Maximian in the West

*Tetrarchy Map

*Tetrarchy Map Zoomed

CONSTANTINE:

-Constantius Chlorus' son Constantine grew up in the East (at Diocletian's court), but when his father became Augustus of the West in 305, Constantine joined him in campaigns.

-AD 306 Constantius Chlorus dies at York in Britain. The army proclaims Constantine as Augustus.

-The Tetrarchy did not recognize Constantine as Augustus of the West and spiraled into civil war (306–324) with multiple factions vying for power: Constantine, Maxentius, Licinius, Maximinus Daia, and others.

Constantine gradually defeats them all:

-AD 312 — defeats Maxentius at the Battle of the Milvian Bridge, solidifying his rule in the West.

-Eusebius recorded that Constantine saw a vision in the sky — a cross of light above the sun with the words “In this sign, conquer” (“in hoc signo vinces” in Latin) and that Christ appeared to Him in a dream.

-AD 313 Constantine issues the Edict of Milan, granting full religious tolerance to Christians, and he favors the church with privileges, wealth, and protection.

-AD 324 He defeats Licinius and becomes sole emperor of the entire empire.

-AD 325 Constantine funds & hosts the Council of Nicaea. (More on this later)

“The convention of bishops was splendid. It was the greatest and most solemn of all councils: bishops from all regions of Europe, Libya, and Asia were present.

There were more than two hundred and fifty of them, distinguished by their learning and their piety. Some were celebrated for their wisdom, others for the austerity of their life and the constancy of their faith.

The Emperor himself, surpassing all others in dignity and grace, came in like a heavenly messenger of God, covered in shining garments of bright purple, adorned with brilliant jewels, reflecting the splendor of gold and precious stones.

He stood in their midst like some celestial being.” ~Eusebius

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Cinco de Mayo was pagan until Constantine Christianized it at the council of Carne asada.

Constantine changed the name to The X-Men and The X-Files to take the Christ out...

Black Friday was pagan until Constantine made it Christian at the council of Sears.

Christian Bale was named Pagan Bale until Constantine Christianized him at the Council of Nicaea... Christian Slater too

*bc1

*bc2

*bc3

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After the Edict of Milan, Constantine granted the Bishops:

- Tax exemptions for clergy and church property.-
- The right to serve as judges in civil disputes (episcopal courts).-
- Imperial subsidies for building churches (e.g., St. Peter's, the Holy Sepulchre, etc).
- He allowed, and even encouraged, bishops to wear robes patterned after Roman officials' garments

Desert monks & monasteries

Basil the Great (AD 329–379)

Wrote the Rule of St. Basil, emphasizing prayer, work, Scripture reading, and service

Benedict of Nursia (AD 480–550)

Wrote the Rule of St. Benedict, which became the blueprint for all Western monastic life.

*Church History Timeline

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AD 330 Constantinople was founded as a "New Rome" by Constantine and made capital of the East, while the West still used (Milan, later Ravenna).

-AD 364 Constantine's sons, Valentinian I & Valens, routinely governed East and West (Milan/Ravenna) separately.

-AD 395 Theodosius I permanently splits the empire — one son rules East (Arcadius in Constantinople), the other West (Honorius in Ravenna).

The Fall of Rome:

-AD 410 Alaric the Visigoth and his troops sack Rome and loot the city for 3 days. First time in 800 years that Rome had been taken by a foreign enemy.

-“The City which had taken the whole world was itself taken.” ~Jerome

-While many are shocked by its fall, Augustine of Hippo writes City of God as a response.

-AD 476 Germanic general Odoacer deposes Romulus Augustulus and it is the official “Fall of the Roman Empire”. The Eastern Empire survives as the “Byzantine Empire”.

-While the Byzantine Empire will continue for many years, the Church in Rome will flounder under the rule of many Germanic Kings until the rise of the Franks.
-AD 800, On Christmas Day, Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne as Emperor of the Romans in Rome, which will formally become known as the Holy Roman Empire.

AD 590, Gregory the Great becomes Pope of Rome.

-Many select this date (among a few) for the official beginning of the Roman Catholic Church.

Gregory:

-He centralized and formalized church lands and finances.
-He laid the groundwork for what would become the Roman mass service
-He is credited with starting the Gregorian chanting for worship.
-He emphasized penance, purgatory, and the intercession of saints
-The Church was no longer merely surviving after Rome's fall — it had become the institution replacing the Roman Empire as the unifying force of Europe.

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*Church History Timeline

The Growing Power of the Papacy

In the earlier stages of the Church, we find many different bishops being called papa

Leo the Great (Pope 440–461)

Sermon 84 (On Lent):

“It is through the ministry of the priests that we obtain forgiveness of sins after baptism; and what they do is of divine institution.”

Gregory the Great (Pope 590–604)

Homilies on Ezekiel 1.7:

“The Scriptures grow with the reader, but none should presume to interpret them apart from the teaching authority of the Church.”

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What the Bible says-

Exodus 19:5-6 NKJV — ‘Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be a special treasure to Me above all people... ‘And you shall be to Me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation...’

1 Peter 2:5 NKJV — you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.

Revelation 1:6 NKJV — and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father...