



A History of Missions

Video of Church Spreading

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Gp-ZsUagc>

Overview of Christianity

Christianity "has now found a home in almost every country in the world. It has adherents among all the races of men, from the most sophisticated of westerners, to the Aborigines of the inhospitable deserts of Australia; and there is no religion of the world which has not yielded a certain number of converts to it. This is something that has never happened before in the history of the world." – Stephen Neil, *History of Christian Missions*.

As we seek to carry out the great commission, what can we do?

Key Point 1: God is building his Church.

Matthew 16:18

Jesus said: “And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of hades will not overcome it.”

Key Point 2: The Church is part of God's eternal plan.

Key Point 3: God's ways are not our ways.

Key Point:
The Church
does not
grow...

- In a logical manner.
- Consistently, geographically or numerically.
- In a way that honors men.

Key Point 4: – The Church is inexorable.

“... the gates of Hell shall not stand against it.”

Each time the church encounters something, an empire, a movement, an idea, a culture, that should logically, in our eyes, destroy it, it conquers it, and comes out stronger, with a better view of God.

Key Point:
The Church
grows...

- Despite opposition from titanic forces – empires, religions, philosophies.
- Unexpectedly, in weakness, and in odd ways.
- In spite of bad theology, bad motives, and bad methods.

Key Point 5: We must understand missions as God's work.

To get a proper understanding of missions is to understand the imperfect, misguided actions of Christians, combined with the wills of empires, philosophical forces, and culture movements, as all being used by God to build His church, not in the way that we think, but as a monument to His skill and ability.

Key Point 6: God is revealing Himself to us (the Church), through the growth of the Church.

An Example: The Chinese Church

635 – Nestorian/Eastern Church Missionaries Reach China

750 – Monasticism Banned and Movement Slows

1400 – Catholic/Jesuit Missions to China

1721 – Jesuits expelled from China.

1840 – Protestant Missions to China (Hudson Taylor)

1900 – Boxer Rebellion (Missionaries and converts killed).

1950 – 4 Million Christians in China

1950 – Communism begins on mainland and persecution.

2010 – Conservative Estimates of 100 Million Christians in China



Admin Matters

70-300 AD – Key Dates

Key Dates

- 30 AD – Death of Jesus Christ
- 33 AD – Death of Stephen
- 48 AD – Council of Jerusalem – Gentile Christians accepted into the Church.
- 67-68 AD – Paul and Peter martyred by Nero.
- 70 AD – Destruction of Jerusalem Temple – Center of Christianity moves to Antioch, Alexandria and Rome
- 90 AD – Book of Revelation written.
- 161-180 AD – Widespread persecution of Christians by Marcus Aurelius
- 249-251 AD – Persecution under Decius
- 284-305 – Persecution under Diocletian
- 301 – Armenia becomes first country to adopt Christianity as state religion
- 313 – Edict of Milan – Christianity is legalized by Constantine.

30-700 AD Christians – aka, the Yokels

Who were the Christians in the first three centuries?

We don't really know.

Lower class men and women. One 2nd Century critic call them “wool-workers, cobblers, laundry-workers, and the most illiterate and bucolic yokels.”

- “On the surface, the early Christians appeared powerless and weak, they were an easy target for scorn and ridicule. They had no great financial resources, no buildings, no social status, no government approval, no respect from the educators. And after they became separated from their first-century association with the Jewish synagogues, they lacked institutional backing and an ancient tradition to appeal to.” Stephen Neil – A History of Christian Missions.

70-300 AD Churches

Mainly home churches, organized around a central leader or a bishop in each city.

Focused on cities and population centers.

70-300 AD Opposing Forces

Roman Culture

- An ecumenical culture that allowed all religions. (Christianity was exclusive).
- A pagan culture where community was tied to idol worship and sacrifices.

Jewish Culture

- The early church initially was tied closely to Judaism, but it was kicked out of synagogues in the late first century after the fall of Jerusalem.

Roman Empire

- Ruled the known world.
- Persecution was spasmodic.
- Emperor worship was a huge part of civic duty.

Various Heresies

Christian Theology in 70-300 AD

No clarity about scripture.

No consensus on divinity or humanity of Christ or the trinity.

Little understanding of grace.

Frequently legalistic

- Disputes about forgiveness after denying Christ.

70-300 AD

Missionary Efforts

The strategy and tactics are not particularly remarkable.

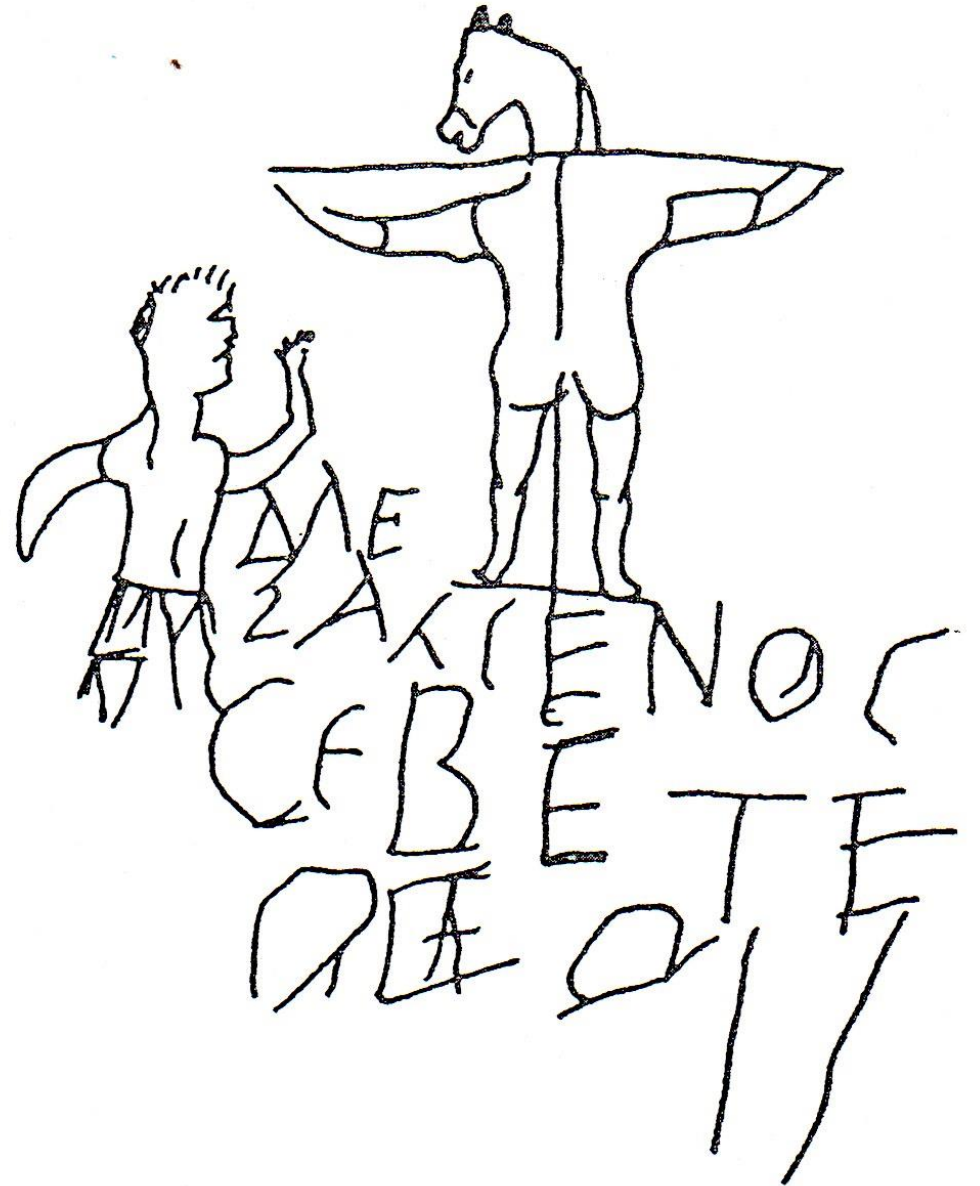
Some preaching in synagogues and other public places.

Mainly personal testimony and hospitality and changed behavior.

Everyone was involved in Evangelism.

- “In that age, every Christian was a missionary. The soldier tried to win recruits, the prisoner sought to bring his jailer to Christ; the slave girl whispered in the ear of her mistress; the young wife begged her husband to be baptized....” John Foxe, Book of Martyrs

A huge emphasis was placed on the Holy Spirit and gifts and power.



Missionary Efforts – Strategy Cont.

Many different presentations to different groups.

There was a great variety in the gospel preached to the Jew and Greek, savage and philosopher.

One Constant: It was focused on Christ. The call was also for repentance, faith and baptism.

Charity, Evangelists, Martyrs and Literature/Arts all played a role.

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Missionary Methods – Charity

They were counter-cultural – calling people out of the pagan, carnal lifestyle of the culture.

They reached out to the lowest parts of society.

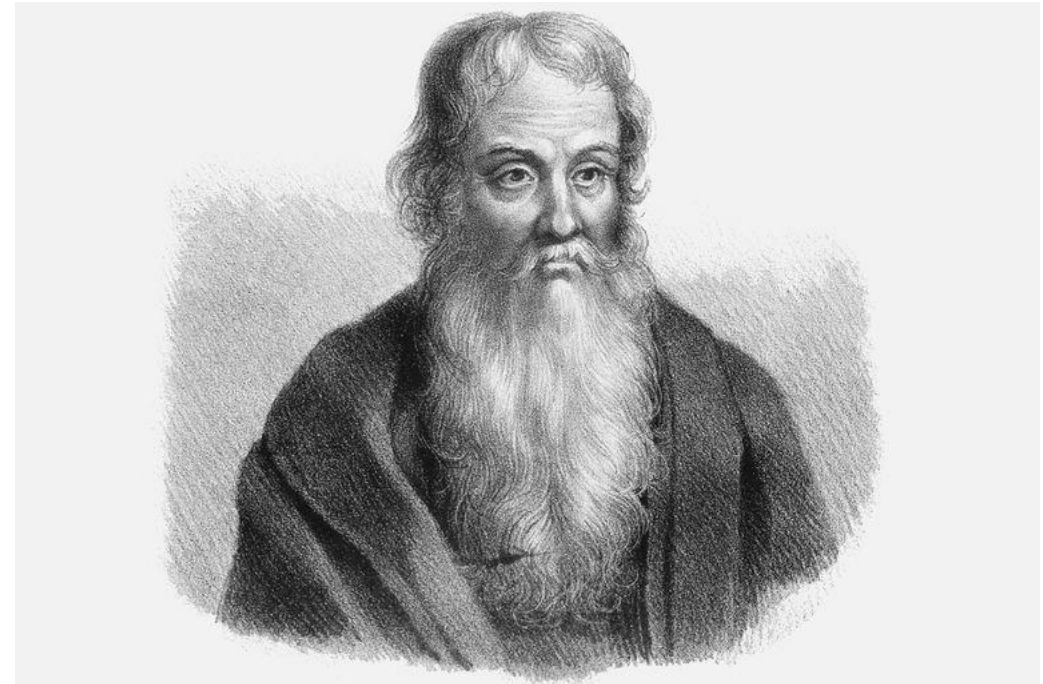
- “These impious Galileans (*Christians*) not only feed their own, but ours also; welcoming them with their agape, they attract them, as children are attracted with cakes... Whilst the pagan priests neglect the poor, the hated Galileans devote themselves to works of charity, and by a display of false compassion have established and given effect to their pernicious errors. Such practice is common among them, and causes contempt for our gods.” Emperor Julian the Apostate

They showed charity.

- Atheism is being specially advanced through the love care devoted to strangers and through their care of the burial of the dead. It is a scandal that there is not a single Jewish beggar; while these Godless Galileans [whom some call Christians] care not only for their own poor, but for ours as well; while those who belong to us look in vain for the service we should render them. “ Emperor Julian the Apostate

Missionary Methods – Evangelists

“At that time [about the beginning of the second century] many Christians felt their souls inspired by the holy word with a passionate desire for perfection. Their first action, in obedience to the instructions of the Savior, was to sell their goods and to distribute them to the poor. Then, leaving their home, they set out to fulfill the work of an evangelist, making it their ambition to preach the word of the faith to those who as yet had heard nothing of it, and to commit to them the books of the divine Gospels. They were content simply to lay the foundations of the faith among these foreign peoples: they then appointed other pastors, and committed to them the responsibility for building up those whom they had merely brought to the faith. Then they passed on to other countries and nations with the grace and help of God.” ([Ecclesiastical History](#), III, 37, 2-3). – Eusebius – Church Historian in 260-340.



Missionary Methods - Martyrs

“The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church.” Tertullian

Much of what is written is probably been revised over the years to treat many of the martyrs as greater than they were.

However, the truth is that there many of these people did give their lives for their faith.

This no doubt had a huge impact on missions/evangelism in the early church.



Missionary Methods – Literature/Arts

This time was the end of Roman/Greek culture.

There mighty philosophers and poets were all gone.

Christian art and literature emerges and begins to develop.



70-300 AD – Conclusion and Impact

The growth of the early Church was without precedent or comparison.

These few Galileans spread their good news across the entire known world.

They did it without all of the things we think of as necessary for missions now:

- Clear Theology
- Knowledge of other cultures
- Administration and organization
- Funding

If in 70 AD the Church had ceased to exist, no one would have known or cared. By 300 AD, Christians made up almost 10% of the Empire.

Growth of Christians

<u>Year</u>	<u># of Christians</u>	<u>% of Population</u> (based on an est. pop. of 60 million)
40	1,000	0.0017
50	1,400	0.0023
100	7,530	0.0126
150	40,496	0.07
200	217,795	0.36
250	1,171,356	1.9
300	6,299,832	10.5
350	33,882,008	56.5

300-500 AD – Key Dates

313 AD – Edict of Milan – Constantine legalizes Christianity

325 AD – Nicean Council – Arianism Heresy is refuted.

381 AD – Council at Constantinople adopts Nicene Creed.

390 AD – Christianity becomes state religion.

397 AD – Synod at Carthage ratifies 27 books of NT as Scripture.

431 AD – Ephesus Council refutes Arianism

451 AD – Council of Chalcedon confirms the hypostatic union

467 AD – Last Roman emperor (Romulus Augustulus) deposed.

300-500 AD - Christians

Christians go from being mainly in the lower parts of society to occupying important government positions.

Christians are found in every walk of life in the Roman Empire.

Many pagans join the church for convenience or political gain.

300-500 AD - Theology

Theology developed rapidly in this time period.

Clarity was gained on many fundamental doctrines.

- Divinity and humanity of Christ.
- Trinity.
- Authority of Scripture

Augustine was the greatest thinker of this era and shaped how we view Biblical exegesis or an approach to interpreting Scripture.

Some of the roots of the errors of the Roman Catholic Church begin.

- Mary was without sin.
- Purgatory, prayers for the dead.
- Eucharist is necessary for salvation.

300-500 AD – Forces Opposed to Christianity

Management of the Roman Empire

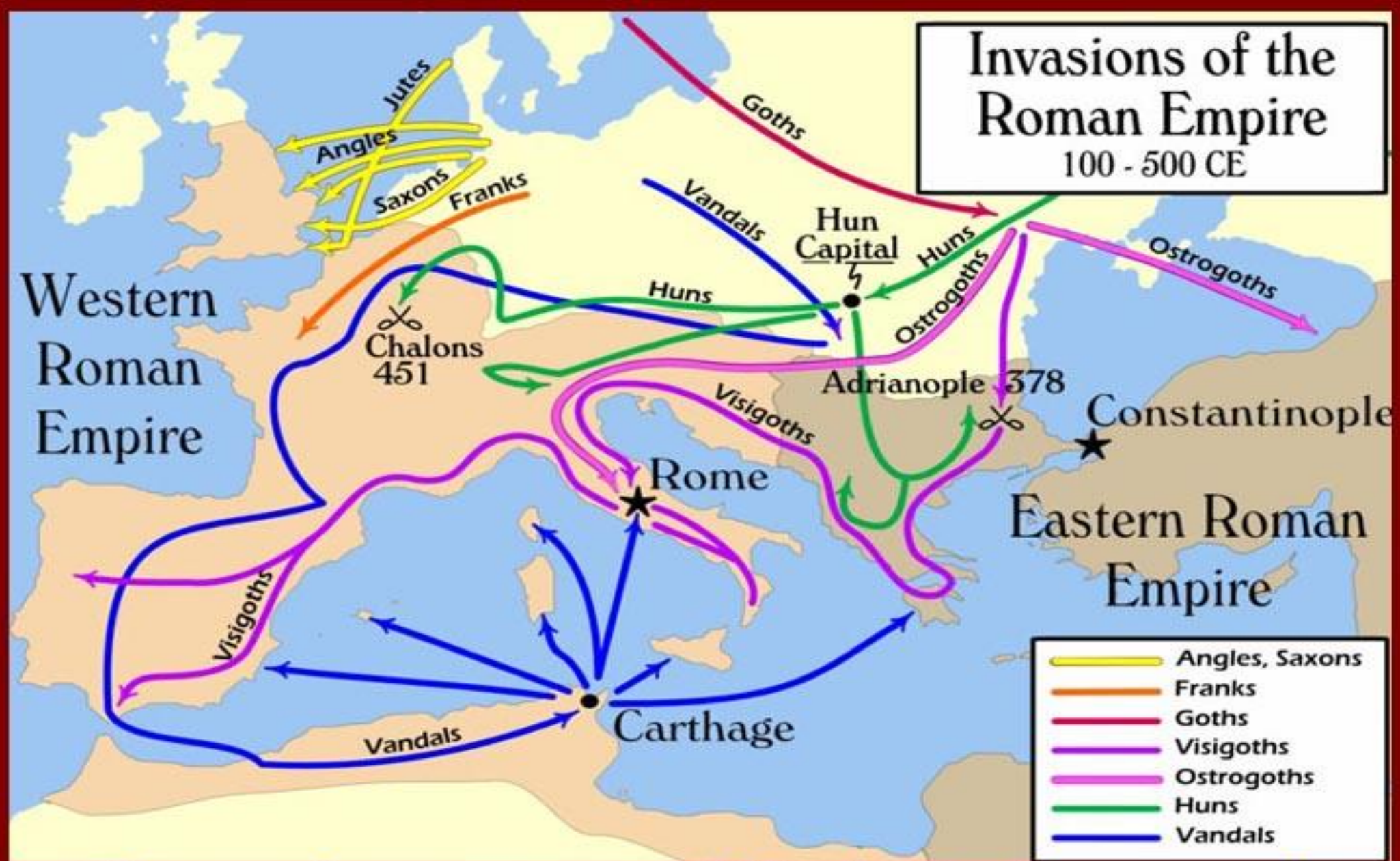
- The Church quickly becomes involved in management of the empire, with church positions becoming political.

Influx of Paganism

- The church ranks are swelled with former pagans who brought their way of life into the church.

Destruction of the Roman Empire

- Rome was repeatedly conquered and sacked by barbarian hordes.
- Roman Empire destroyed.



The complex movements of “barbarians” was greatly affected by the arrival of interlopers from the far east.

300-500 AD - Churches

Churches become large corporate structures – tied into the culture and political life of the empire.

Larger organizational structures began to be developed.

The Bishop of Rome began to assert more and more authority over the church as a whole.

The Church as an Empire

Membership grew quickly, but most members had a superficial faith at best.

Positions of authority in the Church were sought for political reasons.

As a result, bribery/corruption was rampant.

But, at the same time, doctrinal clarity emerged from many of the councils and gatherings.

We see Christians creating works of artistic beauty to express their faith.

300-500 AD – Missionary Efforts

Toward pagans, they were relatively limited/unneeded – the masses came to the church willingly.

Toward quasi Christian heretics, there was constant efforts.

Thus, missionary efforts (if we use that term broadly) were mainly theological debates about fundamental Christian truths.

Also, we do see some of the first professional missionaries being sent by the Church.

Ulfilas

A Goth – who was made a Bishop for the entire gothic race in 341 by the Eastern Church in Constantinople.

For 40 years, he ministered among them.

He was subject to persecution.

He reduced the gothic language to writing and translated the Bible into it.

He was an Arian (the heresy which held that Jesus was the highest created creature).



Patrick of Ireland

From Britain in the 5th Century (400's AD).

Taken as a slave to Ireland where he lived for 6 years.

Then later returned to Ireland as a Cleric.

He believed strongly in dreams and mystical experiences.

Thousands were converted by his efforts and Ireland would a basis for missionary efforts for the next 500 years.





Clotilda of Burgundy

Catholic Christian when most of the Goths were Arians.

Married Clovis, King of the Franks, in 493.

After she was married, she did not rest until her husband had rejected paganism and embraced Christianity.

Clovis claimed a similar experience to Constantine – promised God he would follow him if he granted him victory in battle.

In 496, on Christmas Day, Clovis was baptized with 3,000 of his followers.

300-500 AD Conclusion and Impact

- Tremendous growth for the Church, yet through turmoil.
 - The Church becomes a recognized religion of the Roman Empire (persecution stops), then the religion of the Roman empire, then the Roman empire is destroyed – all in 200 years.
 - Growth is both in numbers, clarity of theology, and administrative structure.
 - Church is diluted by influx of pagans.
- Tremendous growth for the Church, yet without normal missionary efforts.
 - The Church grows through cultural adoption (even by barbarians).
 - The Church grows by conversion of leaders of countries and people groups.
 - Focus is on theological debates and combating heresy, not witnessing to pagans.
- We see the predecessors for future missionary efforts.

500-1200 AD – Key Dates

622 – Mohammed believes himself to be a prophet.

635-42 – Muslim armies conquer Damascus, Jerusalem, Ceasarea, and Alexandria.

732 – Charles Martel turns back the Muslim invasion of Europe.

800 – Charlemagne crowned emperor by the Pope.

909 – Monastic movement begins at Cluny.

988 – Vladimir, Prince of Kiev, chooses Eastern Orthodoxy to be the official religion of the Russian people.

1054 – East-West Schism – Eastern and western churches split.

1095 – Pope Urban II launches the first crusade.

1173 – Peter Waldo founds a reform movement emphasizing poverty, preaching and the Bible.

500 AD – 1200 AD - Theology

The power of the central, Roman Catholic Church, is strengthened.

- Individual churches lose their autonomy.
- This takes the place of the Roman Empire in many respects.

The focus on Christ is decreased and Mary and the Saints take a larger role in the Church.

Priests become necessary intercessors for Christians.

Christian philosophers continue to uncover fundamental truths about the Christian faith and God, which we still rely on today.

- Gospel is rational.
- The meaning of atonement.

500-1200 AD - Church

It becomes a multi-cultural, multi-national institution.

Split into two churches

- The Western Church headquartered in Rome.
 - The predecessor to the Roman Catholic Church.
- The Eastern Church headquartered in Constantinople.
 - The predecessor to the Orthodox Churches.
- The split was made official (the heads of each church excommunicated each other) in 1054 AD.

The Church becomes synonymous with culture and society.

- The Western Church becomes a king-maker – an empire greater than all of the kingdoms of Europe.
- The Eastern Church at its zenith becomes a true Christian Empire. The Church and the Empire are one.

Monasteries, and their communal lifestyle, becomes a huge part of church life.

- They emphasized private prayer, corporate prayer, poverty, and study.

500-1200 AD – Forces Opposing the Church - The Muslims and the Barbarians

Similarities

- Both warlike.
- Both huge threats to the existence of the Church.

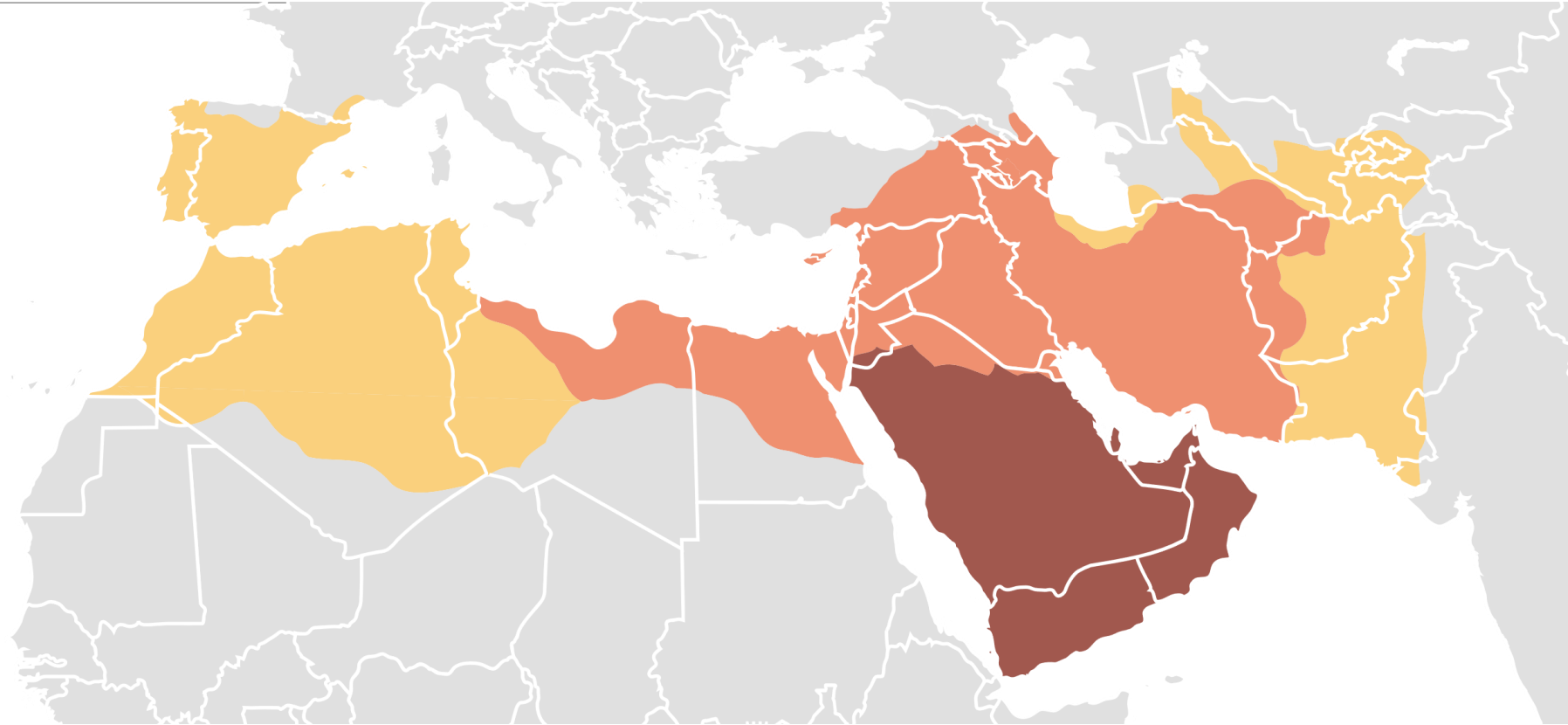
Differences:

- The Muslims primarily attacked the Eastern Church (Constantinople).
- The Barbarians primarily attacked the Western Church (Rome).
- The Muslims had a grand culture, where as the Barbarians had none (no written language).
- The Muslims had an advanced religion that was part of their culture, where as the Barbarians were heathens and pagans.

Outcome

- The Muslims were largely successful in destroying the Eastern Church, although it took almost a millenia.
- Christians were largely unsuccessful in witnessing to the Muslims
- The Barbarians did not destroy the Western Church, but instead were converted largely.

Muslim Conquest



Dark Brown – Conquest by 632; Orange – Conquest by 661; Yellow Conquest by 750

Destruction of the Eastern Church

It began slowly after the Muslim conquest – most churches were not destroyed immediately. They survived the initial conquest well.

- In fact, it was the Christians who provided most of the culture to the great Muslim civilizations. They remained in positions of power and authority.

Rare forced conversions, but discrimination and second class citizen treatment was constant.

Full out persecution was not common, but it did happen repeatedly.

As a result, one commentator said

- “Without blows or torture, people slipped towards apostasy with great eagerness, in groups of twenty, thirty, one hundred, two hundred or three hundred without any compulsion.”

By 1100, Muslims reached 100% in Egypt, Syria and Iraq.

The war with the Byzantine Empire in the 11th and 12th Centuries saw millions more Christians killed.

- “Everywhere, the Christians had been delivered to the sword or into bondage interrupting thus the cultivation of the fields so that bread was lacking. The Farms and workers had been massacred or led off into slavery and famine extended in rigors to all places. Many provinces were depopulated.”

In the 13th and 14th Centuries, Muslim governments openly and harshly discriminated against Christians. Churches were closed, Christians were forced to wear wooden crosses.

In 1453, Muslim forces captures Constantinople. Hagia Sophia, the largest church in the world at that time, was converted to a mosque. For the few remaining members of the eastern church, this was the day the world ended.

Destruction of Eastern Church Complete- 1408

“What a frightful decline! Read all and you shall greatly lament... Fifty-one metropolitanate, eighteen archbishoprics, and 478 bishoprics are desolate.... And not only where those metropolitanates, archbishoprics, bishoprics, the monasteries and churches desolate, but also the provinces of the three patriarchs of Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem. Neither will you find a single metropolitan there, nor other Christian, layman or clergy. But on the thrones of those patriarchates you will find barely a few priests, monks and laymen. Because the churches of their provinces have been obliterated completely and Christ’s people, that is the Christians, have been utterly destroyed.”

Anonymous Greek Churchman, 1480.



Western Church - Conversion by Conquest

Most of the converts to Christianity in this time period were converted at the point of a sword.

Process:

- Factory of Nations generates barbarians.
- Frankish Empire (or another “Christian” Nation) defeats and subjugates them.
- The Church sends in Missionaries (Priests) to the defeated barbarians.
- The missionaries bring Christianity and culture.
- Conversion is mandatory.
- The barbarians rebel and slaughter the missionaries and converts.
- The Frankish Empire/Holy Roman Empire defeats them again, appoints a new ruler, and the process repeats, again and again.
- Until, eventually, the barbarians are assimilated into the quasi-Roman culture of the day, including Christianity.

Eventually, the conquest was done by orders of the Church – which we see most prominently in the Crusades.



Europe at the Death of Theodoric (AD 526)

- Germanic peoples
- Celtic peoples
- Decisive Frankish victory
- Decisive Ostrogothic victory

- LOMBARDS
- BRITONS
- ✕
- ✕

0 300 km

39. EUROPE IN 1100





Crusades

A response to Muslim conquest of the Middle East.

Misguided, petty, and ultimately a tremendous waste of resources.

- Conquest of Constantinople stands as the pinnacle of the hypocrisy of these wars by a religion of peace.

There were not an unproportionate response.

There were not out of context for how Christianity was spread during this time.

Both Churches - Conversion by Culture

Another method of conversion was the culture – the barbarians did not have written languages, and the Church had all of Roman and Greek culture to draw on.

If a barbarian wanted to learn, they had to do it through the church.

Missionary Efforts – Eastern Church

Mostly unknown, yet incredible.

They had to deal with many different languages, and different cultures.

- Some of these cultures were very advanced, such as the Chinese.

They permitted use of other languages and the incorporation of other cultures.

- Russia chose the eastern orthodox church for this very reason.





	Patriarchal sees
	Metropolitan sees
	Bishoprics
	Territorial provinces/ Archbishoprics
	Regions/tribes influenced by Church of the East
	Locations of Eastern Christians
	Archeological findings

Missionary Efforts – Western Church

Largely unknown men and women in conjunction with military conquests

- Boniface is one of the only notable ones.

Iceland – Conversion by Democratic Process.



500-1200 AD – Impact and Conclusions

The Church during this time experienced unprecedented growth.

- At 1000 AD, the church was at the height of its global reach and influence. By 1400, the Eastern church was gone and the church itself was only a fraction of its size. Only recently, in the last 200 years, has it recovered that reach.
- The Western Church came close to destruction early in 720 when the Muslims invaded France.

The sword/conquest had the greatest impact on the spread of Christianity.

- We see this everywhere from the conquest of the barbarians to the Crusades, to the destruction of the Eastern Church

Missionary efforts aided by royal favor, martyrdom and monasticism.

- Conversion often begins with the rulers.
- Priests and church leaders are willing to go repeatedly into areas where their predecessors were martyred.
- Monasteries lead the way.

1200-1500 AD – Key Dates

1204 – Sack of Constantinople during the Fourth Crusade

1216 – Pope approves Dominican and Franciscan mendicant (“begging”) orders.

1247 – Mongols raid through Poland to the edge of Germany

1266 – Thomas Aquinas writes Summa Theologica

1378 – Rival claimants to papacy.

1380 – John Wycliffe translates Bible into English

1415 – John Hus is burned

1453 – Constantinople falls to Ottoman Turks

1200-1500 AD - Christians

The wealth disparity becomes complete with the rise of the aristocracy.

Most poor Christians can't read and never hear a word of scripture in a language they can understand.

Members of the Clergy continued to be wealthy and powerful.

- Indulgence sales during this time were hugely profitable.

1200-1500 AD - Church

The Western Church remains the strongest and most powerful institution in Europe, yet weakness and internal strife weakens it.

- The Popes power wanes and the power of the nation states of Europe surges.
- The excesses of the Church brought it almost to bankruptcy.
- The Papal Schism saw not two, but three popes at the same time, each denouncing the others.
- Reformers (including Wycliff) subscribed to the notion that the state had the ability to remedy abuses by the Church.
- The Western Church refused to reform its behavior, setting the stage for the Reformation.

Very little pastoral care in the Western Church.

The Eastern Church's destruction is completed.

1200-1500 AD Theology

The legalism of the Catholic Church is taken to its logical extreme with indulgences.

The structural theology of the Church leads to the inquisition. The Church justifies torture to preserve the purity of the church community.

The logical and theological treaties of the day were unmatched in their analysis of theology.

- Summa Theologica or a Summary of Theology by Thomas Aquinas is the first major Systematic Theology.
- Much of our understanding of God, man, justification, and sin is based on these works.

Reformers begin to push back against the legalistic, cold theology and structure of the Catholic Church.

- Francis of Assisi, Peter Waldo, John Wycliffe and John Hus

The Inquisition

This is a name that is given to a group of institutions within the Catholic Church that were designed to combat heresy.

- This was justified on the basis of a Christian community that needed to be protected.

Inquisitor was judge and executioner.

Torture was authorized, but most punishments were less, like wearing a cross, or going on a pilgrimage.

Its darkest hour was in Spain, where it helped force the conversion or expulsion of all the Jews living there.



Mongols

THE FIRST MAJOR ADVANCE
IN MILITARY TECHNOLOGY
SINCE THE ROMAN LEGIONS.

CONQUERED ASIA IN A VERY
SHORT PERIOD OF TIME.

RUTHLESS, ALMOST BEYOND
DESCRIPTION. THEY KILLED
MILLIONS.



Death of Ogedei Khan

“At one moment it had seemed as if all Europe would succumb to a terrible menace looming up from the East. Heathen Mongol hordes from the heart of Asia, formidable horsemen armed with bows, had rapidly swept over Russia, Poland, Hungary, and in 1241 inflicted simultaneous crushing defeats upon the Germans near Breslau and upon European cavalry near Buda. Germany and Austria at least lay at their mercy. Providentially in this year the Great Khan died in Mongolia; the Mongol leaders hastened back the thousands of miles to [Karakorum](#), their capital, to elect his successor, and Western Europe escaped.” Winston Churchill



Mongol Destruction of the Muslims

From 1250 to 1260, the Mongols destroyed the Muslim kingdoms in modern day Iraq, Iran, Syria, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

While they were eventually stopped, the strength of the Muslim empires was broken for years to come, and they were never a great military threat to Christian Europe.

Witnessing to the Mongols

The Mongols were not religious and like the Romans, allowed all religions.

The Roman Catholic Church attempted on several occasions to witness to leader of the Mongol horde.

Mongols leaders often married Christians and kept Christians in their households.

But, they rejected all of the advances, viewing the Pope (correctly) as a leader of Europe and demanding tribute and obedience from him.

- “Now you should say with a sincere heart: ‘I will submit and serve you. ‘Thou thyself, at the head of all the Princes, come at once to serve and wait upon us... If you do not observe God’s command, I shall know you as my enemy...”

A later Khan actually sent an Christian emissary (a patriarch from the Eastern Church) to the Roman Catholic church, seeking an alliance. However, the Roman Catholics were slow to respond, and that Khan died and his son became a Muslim.

When the Mongol Empire fell to infighting and the Black Plague, Muslim nations rose in its place.

1200-1500 AD – Missionary Efforts

During this time period, the old missionary efforts (broadly speaking) of conquest slowly begin to give way to the new ways of kindness, love and reason.

- The Church was confronted with the fact that they could not militarily defeat the Muslims.
- The Church had no answer whatsoever to the Mongol horde.

Through the actions of reformers and scholars, small groups began to use kindness and reason as part of the missionary efforts.

- Francis of Assisi used kindness and care for the poor as part of his ministry.
- Raymond Lull and Thomas Aquinas used reason in an attempt to convert the Muslims.

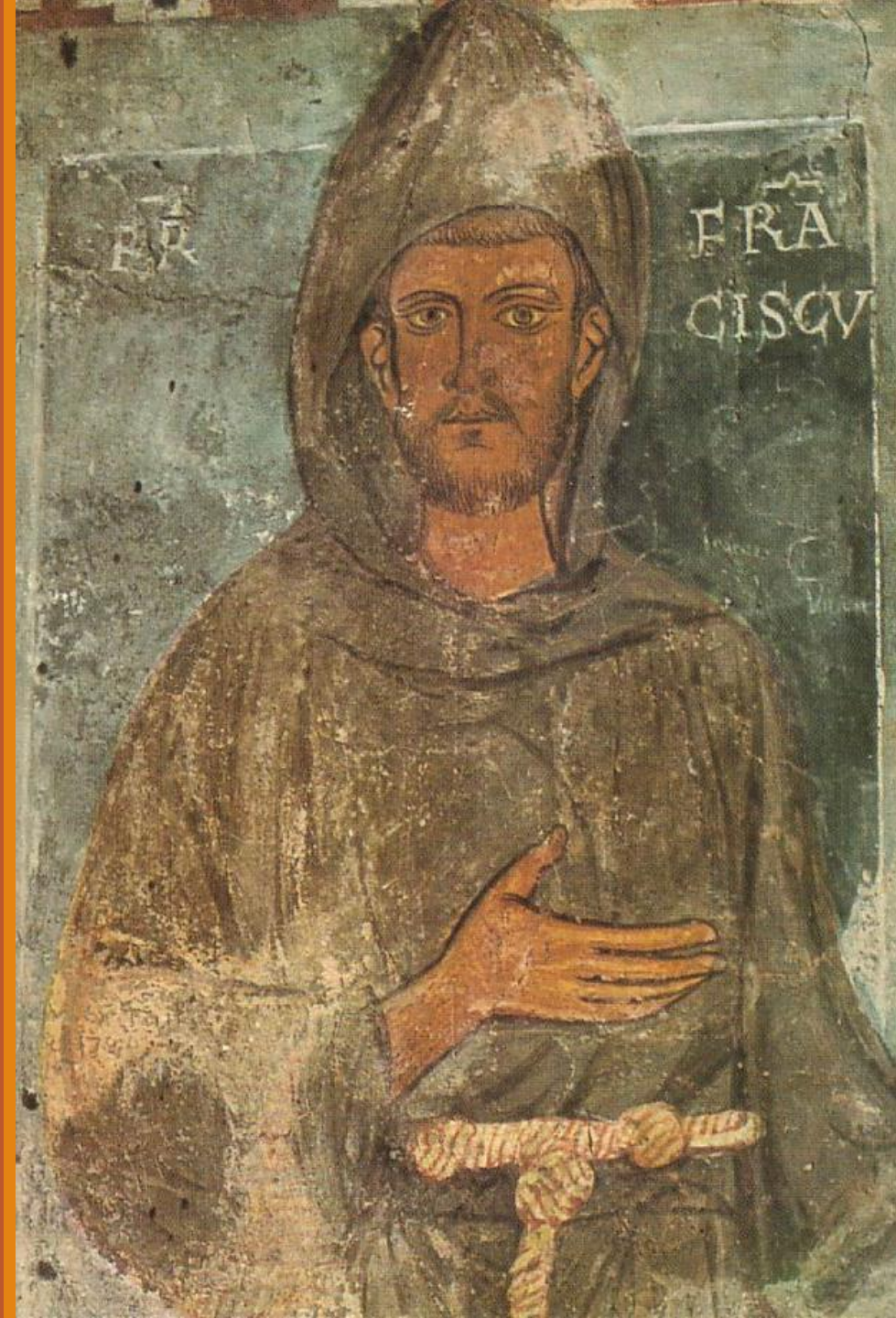
Francis of Assisi

Francis was from a rich family, but he abandoned his inheritance after several religious experiences.

He was determined to bring the gospel to all peoples of the world and convert them. He himself spent a substantial portion of his life encouraging Christians to follow Christ in living a simple life.

He established several catholic orders that were dedicated to poverty and care for the poor. At one point, he spent several years nursing lepers.

He even sought to witness to the Sultan of Egypt during the Crusades. He didn't convert him (although he tried), but such was his impact and testimony that the Sultan allowed him and his order to remain in Jerusalem.



Missionary Efforts - Thomas Aquinas

According to tradition, Thomas Aquinas wrote his second great work, *Summa Contra Gentiles* to be used to help missionaries in Spain convert the Muslims and the Jews there.

This work is directed to non-believers and functions as an attempt to use reason to convert them.



Missionary Efforts - Raymond Lull

A contemporary of Aquinas.

He dedicated himself to converting the Muslims, and specifically, the nomadic Muslim Saracens, the most feared and hated enemies of Christianity.

He studied Arabic.

He set aside funds to take care of his wife and children, and left them to focus on the ministry.

He set up training facilities to teach Arabic.

He traveled to Tunis where he debated the Muslim philosophers, and preached the gospel until he was stoned and ordered out of the country.

His message was very offensive to the Muslims – he would hold up the Ten Commandments and tell the Muslims how Mohammed had violated every single one of them.

But, he was a pioneer of the idea that reason and rationale discussion should be used to reach the Muslims, not conquest.

1200-1500 AD – Impact and Conclusion

We once again see God preserving the Church from the Mongols and the Muslim Empire.

We see God revealing things about himself in the midst of one of the worst abuses of the Church.

The conquest method of evangelism stops, thankfully. The Church's physical and material power decreases.

Multiple reformers are rejected by the Church.

But, we see the groundwork being laid for not only the Reformation, but a major Roman Catholic missions movement.

Conclusions

In 70-300 AD, we see the Church growing without precedent, yet without any of the things we think of as necessary for missions efforts.

In 300-500 AD, we see the Church growing without Missions.

In 500-1200 AD, we see the Church growing through conquest.

In 1200-1500 AD, in spite of darkness and apostacy, we see the Church beginning to grow through missions aimed at kindness, helping the needy, and apologetics/rationale discussions.

Conclusions

It is easy to get disappointed when you view history from a human perspective.

But, remember our six key points:

Key Point 1: God is building his Church.

- God uses everything, even corrupt Churchmen, power-hungry nobles, barbarians and secular empires, to grow his Church.
- The greatest armies and forces the world has ever known cannot conquer the church.

Key Point 2: The Church is part of God's eternal plan.

- This growth is not random, there is a purpose in all of it.

Key Point 3: God's ways are not our ways.

- The story of the growth of the Church is not how we would have written it.
- None of these Christians or churches deserved to be in God's plan, but neither do we.

Key Point 4: The Church is inexorable.

Key Point 5: We must understand missions as God's work.

Key point 6: God is revealing Himself to us (the Church), through the growth of the Church.