

MJ World History

Grade 6 / Week 7

Your Week at a Glance
<input type="checkbox"/> Early Christianity in the Roman Empire

Name

Teacher

NOTE: If you have any difficulty completing this lesson, contact your teacher.

LCS 6th Grade World History Distance Learning Assignment

Week 7: Parent Notes

In this course, students learn about the major world religions and their beginnings. Previously, students learned about Judaism and Buddhism. This week, students will use materials from the workbook of their adopted textbook, McGraw-Hill's *Succeeding in Early World History*, to take a closer look at the beginnings of Christianity in the Roman Empire. The following state standards are addressed in this week's lesson:

SS.6.W.3.13 Identify key figures and the basic beliefs of early Christianity and how these beliefs impacted the Roman Empire.

SS.6.G.4.4 Map and analyze the impact of the spread of various belief systems in the ancient world.

Learning Activities: Students should read pages 439 – 448 from the workbook and—to the best of their ability—answer the questions in the margin to guide their reading and understanding.

Assessment: Once students have completed the reading and made notes in the margin, they should answer the questions below. This will serve as an assessment of their understanding. Students may write their answers on notebook paper or answer in a Word document.

- (1) Re-read the section on Judaism and Rome on pages 439-440. Describe life for Jews living in the Roman Empire?
- (2) What place did Jews considered their “holy city”? Why did they leave their holy city?
- (3) All of the world religions we have studied so far have a teacher/leader, core beliefs, religious texts, and a story about their migration¹ to other places. Using information from pages 440-443, complete the table below for early Christianity. The first one is done for you.

Characteristics of Early Christianity	
Characteristic	Description
Teacher/Leader	Jesus of Nazareth traveled throughout Galilee and Judea spreading his message based on Jewish ideas.
Origin – where it started	
Core Beliefs	
Religious Texts - Print or Oral	
Major Events in Early Christianity	

- (4) According to page 444, what made it possible for Christianity to spread throughout Europe? Give two reasons from the text in your answer.
- (5) Why did the Romans feel threatened by the growing number of Christians? In your answer, provide at least two reasons from the text.
- (6) What did the Roman emperor Constantine do to support Christianity in the Roman empire? Provide at least two examples from the text in your answer.
- (7) According to Christians, how did the teachings of Jesus Christ make it into print?
- (8) According to the text on page 448, Christianity split into two separate churches. What were the names of the two churches and how were their beliefs different?

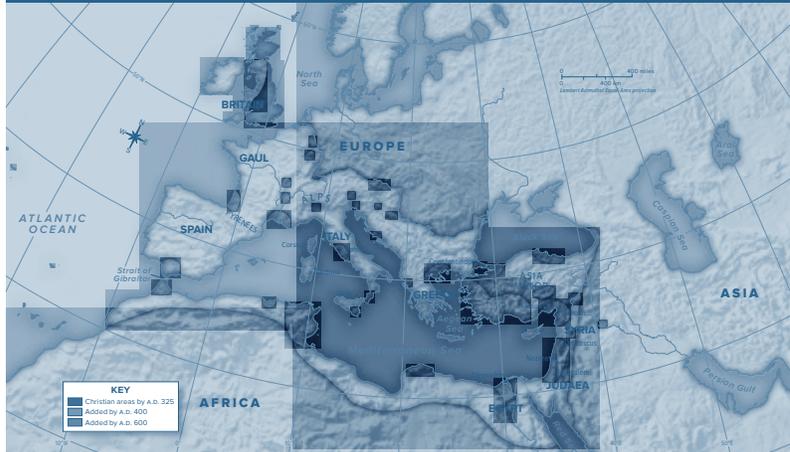
¹ Movement to one or more places

LESSON 1 SUMMARY

Early Christianity

SS.W.3.8, SS.W.3.13, SS.6.G.4.4

Spread of Christianity to A.D. 600



Christianity began in a part of the Roman Empire called Judaea. It spread throughout the Mediterranean regions and ultimately into Europe.

ANALYZING MAPS

1. Locate Rome and Judaea on the map. How might the location of Judaea have influenced the way the Romans ruled the region?

Judaism and Rome

The Romans permitted Judaism to be practiced throughout the empire. However, they harshly ruled over the Jews of Galilee and Judaea. Many Jews there hoped God would send a deliverer to free them from Roman rule and to restore the kingdom of Israel.

Control by Romans

In 63 B.C. the Romans had taken over Judah, but they still allowed Jewish kings to rule there. In A.D. 6, Augustus made Judah a Roman province and renamed it Judaea. He replaced the Jewish ruler with a Roman governor, or procurator, who was given tight control over the Jewish people.

Many Jews disliked the changes, but they disagreed over how to react. Some wanted to cooperate to avoid conflict. Others avoided Roman rule by moving to remote areas. However, they all still considered Jerusalem their holy city.

Jewish Revolts

One group of Jews, called Zealots, believed they should fight Rome's occupation. In A.D. 66 the Zealots rebelled, but the Romans were able to crush the revolution. They killed thousands of Jews and destroyed the Jewish temple in Jerusalem.

2. MAKING INFERENCES

When the fortress of Masada fell to the Romans, Jewish defenders took their own lives rather than surrender. What does this decision suggest about the Jews and their beliefs?

LESSON 1 SUMMARY, *continued*

Jesus used everyday language that people could easily understand. He told stories called **parables** when he preached. Parables were about normal people and events from everyday life, and they each contained a message. Often, the message was that God is a kind and forgiving deity. Jesus taught people to obey God by being kind and forgiving.



In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus preached using everyday language that people could understand.

How Did Christianity Begin?

People reacted strongly to Jesus and his message. His followers told stories of Jesus healing the sick and performing other miracles. Some Jews believed that Jesus was the deliverer they had been hoping for. Others, however, thought Jesus was deceiving people. Roman rulers were afraid of Jesus’s growing influence and considered him a threat to their authority.

When the Romans brought statues of the emperor to Jerusalem, many Jews saw them as false idols. They refused to worship them, adding to tensions between Rome and the Jewish people.

In about A.D. 33, Jesus traveled to Jerusalem with his disciples to celebrate Passover, one of the Jewish holy days. When he arrived, he was welcomed by a large excited crowd. Many in the city greeted him as the promised deliverer. Jesus’s celebration of the Passover meal with his disciples became known as the Last Supper.

ANALYZING VISUALS

4. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS

Look at the people in the image. What can you conclude about Jesus’s message and the people who came to hear him preach?

5. MAKING ARGUMENTS

With a partner, discuss the following prompt: “The best leaders are those who are kind and forgiving.” Tell your partner why you agree or disagree with the statement. Use evidence from the text to support your ideas. Allow your partner to respond to your ideas with questions or with other ideas supported by the text. Then summarize your partner’s views and evaluate his or her use of text evidence to support those ideas.

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LESSON 1 SUMMARY, *continued*

What Are Basic Christian Beliefs?

Early Christians did not believe in the many gods and goddesses of Rome. They followed one God alone. They believed Jesus was the son of that God and that he had come to save people. Christians believed they could gain **salvation** by accepting Jesus and his teachings. Salvation allowed followers to enter heaven and be forgiven for their sins. Like Jesus, they would join God in everlasting life after death.

Christians, like the Jews, still believed in the God of Israel and in the Hebrew scriptures. However, Christians believed in God in a new and different way. They believed in the Christian Trinity. The Trinity refers to the three persons of God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These teachings are central to the Christian faith.

Christianity spread throughout the world in the hundred years after Jesus’s death. The stability of the Roman Empire allowed early Christians to spread their beliefs.

7. DETERMINING CAUSE AND EFFECT

In what ways did the stability of the Roman Empire affect the spread of Christianity? Why do you think so?



REVIEW LESSON 1

1. Complete the chart to summarize Jesus’s teachings.

Jesus’s Teachings	
Based on:	

2. **COMPARING** Write an essay on a separate sheet of paper to answer the following questions: How were the early beliefs and practices of the apostles of Jesus similar to those of the Jews? Why do you think they share so many similarities?

LESSON 2 SUMMARY, *continued*

3. MAKING CONNECTIONS

What impact did the expansion of trade in Axum have on the spread of Christianity?

ANALYZING VISUALS

4. INTERPRETING

Why are the bars at the top of the chart smaller than those at the bottom? What does this suggest about the responsibilities and power of the patriarchs and laity?

The Roman emperor Theodosius went even further. After banning Greek and Roman religions, Theodosius made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire in A.D. 392.

Axum and Kush

As Christianity spread through the Roman Empire, powerful trading kingdoms were developing in east Africa. Ethiopia, also known as Abyssinia, was one of these kingdoms. The Ethiopian city-state of Axum was a trading center. Through Axum, Mediterranean and east Asian traders brought goods into and out of Africa. Axum defeated Kush, a nearby city-state, around A.D. 300 and took control of the city. Then in A.D. 334, Axum's king Ezana made Christianity the official religion of Axum.

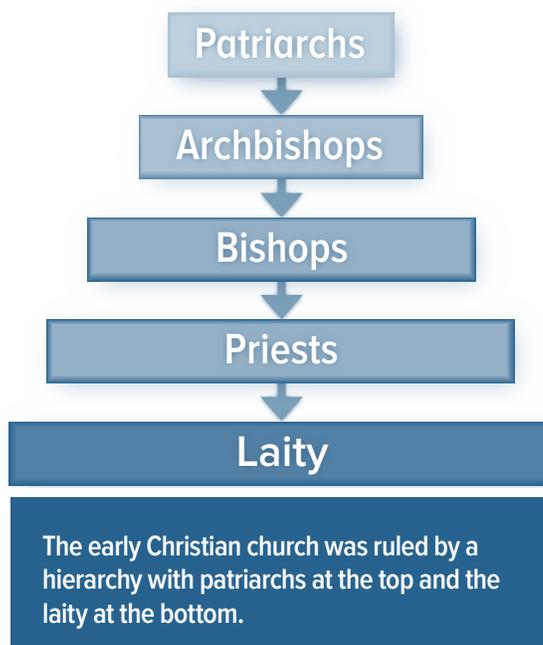
Organizing the Church

As the Christian world expanded, separate Christian communities began to practice Christianity differently. In an attempt to unify their followers, early Christian leaders decided to clarify and write down their beliefs.

Church Leadership

Early Christians used the Roman Empire as their model for organizing the church. They set up different levels of authority within the church. This type of organization is called a **hierarchy**.

EARLY CHURCH HIERARCHY



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LESSON 2 SUMMARY, *continued*

6. EVALUATING

Why did the early Christian church divide into two?

The Bishop of Rome

Not all bishops had equal power. The bishop of Rome claimed to have received his authority from the apostle Peter. Rome was also the capital of the Roman Empire. As a result, the Bishop of Rome’s power increased as Christianity grew. By A.D. 600, the bishop of Rome was called **pope**, a special title that comes from the Latin word *papa*, meaning “father.” Latin-speaking Christians in the west accepted the pope as head of all churches. However, Greek-speaking Christians did not. The Greeks claimed that they too had a connection to the apostles. They distanced themselves from the Latin-speaking Christians who became the Roman Catholic Church. Eventually, the Greek churches became known as the Eastern Orthodox Church.



REVIEW LESSON 2

- Complete the table below with information about the organization of the early Christian church.

EARLY CHURCH HIERARCHY	RESPONSIBILITY
patriarchs	were the religious leaders of Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem
	were the clergy in charge of an entire region
bishops	
laity	were regular church members

- DRAWING CONCLUSIONS** Early Christian leaders wanted to bring unity and stability to the Christian Church. Why do you think they chose to establish a hierarchy? Explain how each position in the hierarchy would have contributed to unifying the Church as a whole.

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