

# A Chronology of Events Affecting the Church of Christ from the First Century to the Restoration

## 3. The Rise of the Roman Catholic Church (325) to Iconoclast Movement (726)

These notes draw dates and events from timelines at the following websites: [www.therestorationmovement.com](http://www.therestorationmovement.com), [www.churchtimeline.com](http://www.churchtimeline.com), and [www.wikipedia.com](http://www.wikipedia.com). The interpretation of events and the application of scripture to these events, as they affect the church of Christ, which was built by the Lord (Matt 16:18), remain the responsibility of this writer.

### Sinister Beginnings from the 4<sup>th</sup> Century

325 The First Council of Nicea was a council of Christian bishops convened in Nicaea in Bithynia (present-day İznik in Turkey) by the Roman Emperor Constantine I in A.D. 325. The Council was the first effort to attain consensus in the church through an assembly representing all of Christendom.

The council constructed the first part of the Nicene Creed which settled the Christological issue of the relationship of Jesus to God the Father. The decision that Jesus was the same substance as the Father secured the doctrine of the Trinity, described above as the central doctrine of the catholic and protestant churches. The scriptures teach a plurality in the Godhead with distinctively personal representation. See notes on the advent of the doctrine in the year 160.

### The Spread of Christianity Throughout the Roman World



- city with Christian community by end of first century
- city with Christian community by end of second century
- extent of Roman Empire
- Roman provincial or regional name

[from The Moody Atlas of Bible Lands. Copyright © 1985 by the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.]

This ability to develop binding theology on the nature of divinity gave rise to the changing stature and nature of Mary to the Catholic Church [See notes on 1200 below].

They settled the calculation of the date of Easter. Easter is not mentioned in the New Testament where every first day of the

week observes the Lord’s Supper and the Ressurrection (Acts 20:7; I Cor 11:13-27). Col 2:16-17 teaches: “16 Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. 17 These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.”

They promulgated the early version of canon law: 20 new and binding laws (Rev 22:18-19).

**Early Middle Ages from the 5<sup>th</sup> Century through the 10<sup>th</sup> Century**

400 Jerome’s Vulgate

Latin edition and translation of the Bible is published. While the Eastern Church propogated translations in the language of the people, the Western Church propagated a Latin version which only the clergy and highly educated could read. This act alone stifled the very spirit of Acts 17:11-12: “11 Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.” This act also made it impossible for Christians to keep the command of 2 Tim 2:15: “15 Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”

c 400 Ethiopic Bible

An Ethiopian Orthodox Bible is translated

c 400 Peshitta Bible in Syriac (Aramaic)

This Syriac Orthodox Church Bible excluded 1 and 2 Peter; 2 and 3 John; Jude.

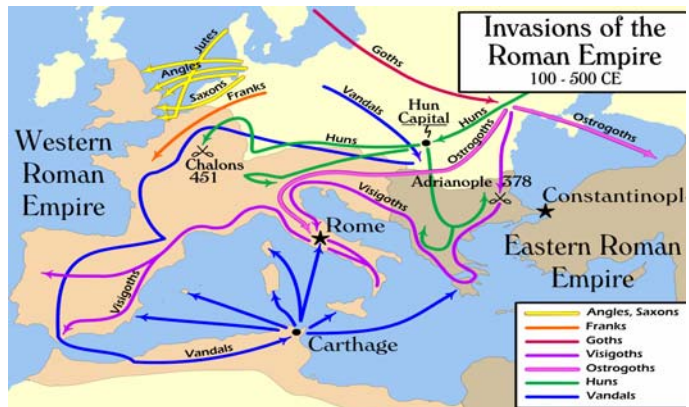
406 Armenian Bible



Saint Mesrob translated this standard Armenian Orthodox Bible

406 Visigoths, Suevi, Burgundians crossed the Rhine and invaded Roman Gaul. The collapse of the Western Roman Empire began.

**Invasions of the Roman Empire: 100-500 CE**

Commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/User:MapMaster1 October 2006 [From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia]



- 410 Alaric I and the Visigoths under Alaric I led a Visigothic army eventually moved into Italy and famously sacked Rome in 410.
- 431 Council of Ephesus This council decreed Mary the Mother of God, forbade any changes to the Nicene Creed of 381, which was rejected by the Persian Church. It re-confirmed Jesus as the same substance as the Father.
- 440-461 Leo the Great
- 
- Phantasy-image of Pope Leo I from the Pope-Gallery of San Paolo fuori le Mura. 19th century. [From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia]
- Leo is considered the first Pope. The Western Church, applied the word *Pope* especially to the Bishop of Rome, since the time of Leo. They claimed the word *Pope* exclusively from 1073. Leo is best known for meeting with Attila the Hun outside Rome in 452, and persuading him to turn back from his invasion of Western Europe.
- Pope: O.E. papa, from M.L. papa "bishop, pope" (in classical L., "tutor"), from Gk. papas "patriarch, bishop," originally "father." Applied to bishops of Asia Minor and taken as a title by the Bishop of Alexandria c. 250. From [www.etymonline.com/](http://www.etymonline.com/)
- 476 Odovacar The last Roman Emperor is deposed by Odovar, ending the Western Roman Empire.
- 496 Clovis, King of the Franks The influence of the Catholic Church in France began when Clovis was converted to the Catholic faith.
- c 500 The Apostles' Creed The name of the Creed probably comes from a fifth-century legend that says that, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit after Pentecost, each of the Twelve Apostles dictated part of it. It is traditionally divided into twelve articles. [Apostles' Creed, Wikipedia, the Free encyclopedia.] See Gal. 1:6-10.
- 571 Mohammed is born.
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- This illustration depicts what Muhammad thought was his first revelation from the angel Gabriel and is from the book *Jami' al-tawarikh* by Rashid-al-Din Hamadani, published in 1307 AD.
- Edinburgh University Library, Scotland.  
[http://www.zombietime.com/mohammed\\_image\\_archive/islamic\\_mo\\_face\\_hidden/](http://www.zombietime.com/mohammed_image_archive/islamic_mo_face_hidden/) [From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia]

c 580 Instruments of music were added to the church worship and rejected.  
About 60 years later, they were introduced again and received.

Later, virtually all the reformers rejected the instruments of music in the church. This departure from the New Testament violated the specific teaching of Eph 5:19:

“19 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.”

And Col 3:16:

“16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.”

The restoration of New Testament church would depend on following the New Testament pattern in worship. No instruments, choirs, or solos are present in the worship of the early church. Paul described departures in Phil 3:17-19: “17 Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. 18 For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.” Paul told Timothy to keep the pattern of sound teaching in 2 Tim 1:13-14: “13 What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus.”

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Boniface III

"Pope's Photo Gallery"

[http://cckswong.tripod.com/pope51\\_100.htm](http://cckswong.tripod.com/pope51_100.htm)

The Catholic Church declared Boniface III to be the universal head of the church. It was determined that whatever he spoke was the words of God. This came from a decree from Phocas "the See of Blessed Peter the Apostle should be the head of all the Churches". Thus, the title of "Universal Bishop" belonged exclusively to the Bishop of Rome.

cf. Heb. 1:1,2; Matt 17:5; Matt 28:20

By tradition, the Catholic Church claims Peter as first Pope, the Bishop of Rome. The Church also claims the title, Father, via the Greek word *pappas*. Yet, Jesus taught in Matt 23:9-10: “9 And do not call anyone on earth 'father,' for you have one Father, and he is in heaven.” No evidence places Peter in Rome.

610 Mohammed claimed revelations from God, which were recorded in the Qur'an.

His visions formed the basis of the Islamic religion. He is regarded as the most important prophet of Islam. Widely, regarded as illiterate, Mohammed had others record his revelations.

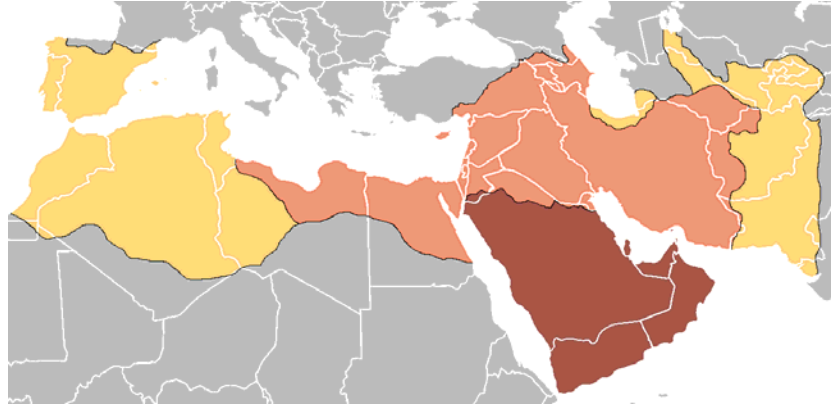
638 Muslims capture Jerusalem

**The Expansion of Islam: 622-750**

- 643 Muslims take Alexandria
- 698 Muslims take Carthage

Age of the Caliphs

- Expansion under Muhammad, 622-632/A.H. 1-11
- Expansion during the Rashidun Caliphate, 632-661/A.H. 11-40
- Expansion during the Umayyad Caliphate, 661-750/A.H. 40-129



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Adapted from <http://www.gl.iit.edu/govdocs/maps/maps.htm> (via Image:Age\_of\_Caliphs.png), traced on high resolution version of Image:BlankMap-World6.svg [From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia]