

The background is a light beige or cream color with a subtle, fine-grained texture. On the left side, there is a large, dark ink splatter that spreads outwards, with many smaller, scattered ink droplets and specks extending across the left half of the page. The main title is centered in the lower half of the page.

Christianity

The Basics I

Goals

- **Basic Background**
- **Story of John the Baptist**
- **Jewish Society**
- **Story of Jesus**
- **The Birth and Spread of Christianity**
- **Christianity Splits**



Background

- **2 billion followers**
 - 1 billion Catholics
 - 450 M Protestants
- **Based on the history/stories of Old & New Testament**
 - Old T: Torah
 - New T: 27 Books recounting story of Jesus and his disciples
 - The 4 Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John)
 - Revelations: End of the world, return of the Messiah

John the Baptist (4-6BC)

Jesus: "Among them that are born of women there has not arisen a greater than John the Baptist . . ." (Matthew 11)

- Same age as Jesus.
- John baptizes Jesus.
- Feared by the political elite.
- John is beheaded in a political conspiracy.



John the Radical

- Lived an ascetic lifestyle (ate bugs, lived in the wild, etc.)
- Rejected materialism of his day
- Preached on the sins of man and the coming of the Messiah

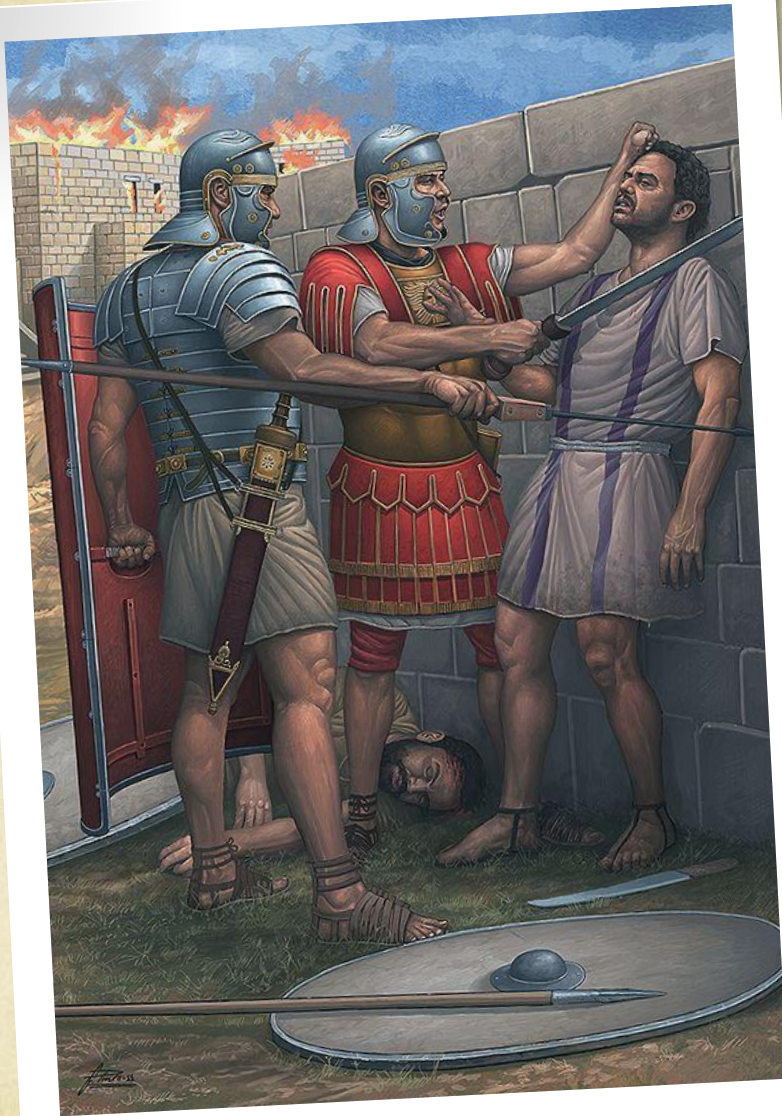


John the Radical



- Many believed John was the Messiah
- He consistently rejected this and said he is merely the messenger.
- “Behold, the Lamb of God”
- Beheaded in a conspiracy.





Jewish Society

Judea under Roman Control

Allowed to worship God:

- Must pay taxes
- Follow Roman rules
- Do not disrupt the system.

Q: What were some responses to Roman control?



4 Responses

Sadducees:

- Pragmatically follow Greek culture and Roman rule.

Essenes:

- Withdraw from society, live ascetic lifestyle.





4 Responses

Zealots:

- Rebel against Roman rule with force.
- Suffered many defeats.

Pharisees:

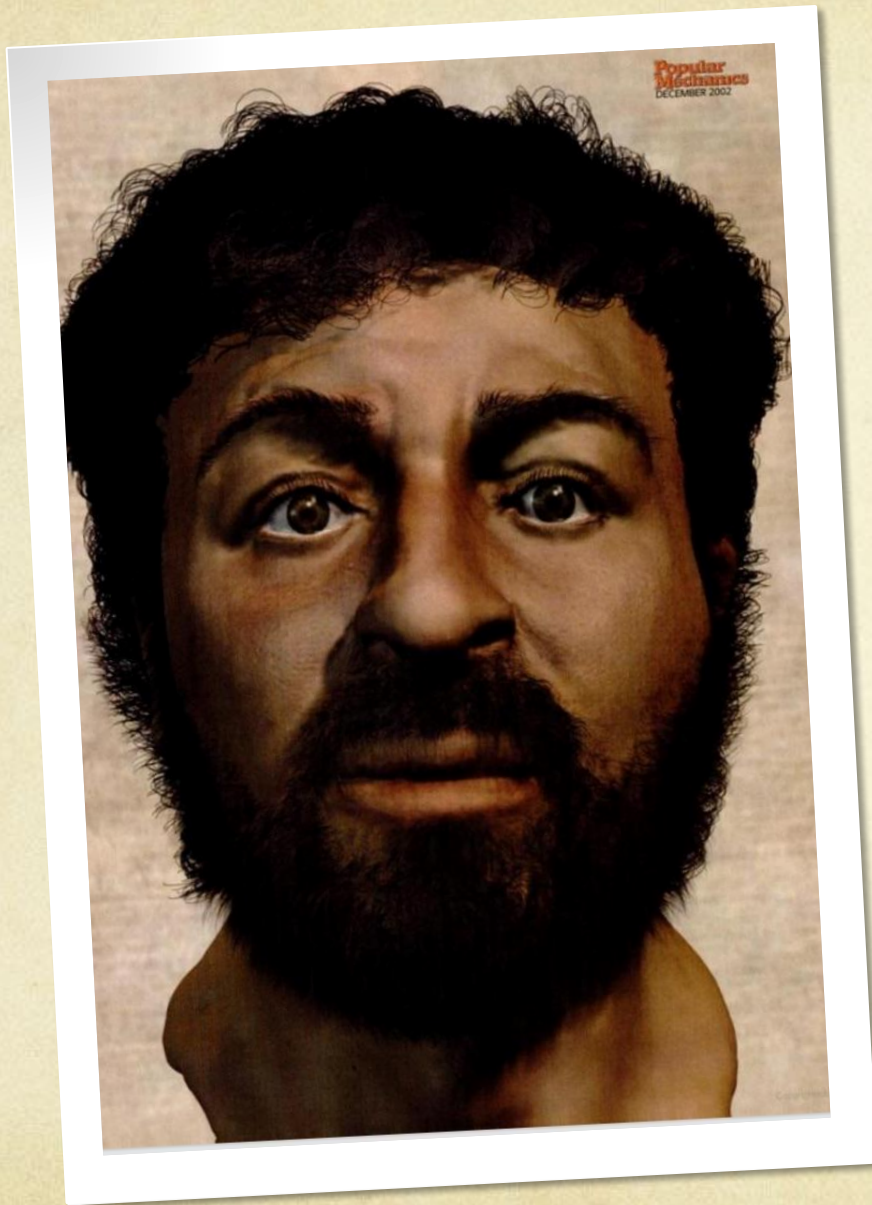
- Stay in society under Roman rule.
- Teach and live by conservative Judaic laws of Moses.
- Built powerful political alliances with Romans.





Story of Jesus

- Born in Bethlehem (Palestine) 4-6BC
- Virgin birth, son of a carpenter
- Jesus' missing years (12-30):
 - Some believe he remains in Nazareth as a carpenter
 - Small minority suggest he travelled to nearby lands, learning their ways of life
 - Egypt, India, Tibet?



Story of Jesus

- Jesus returns at 30.
- Baptized by JTB.
- Begins ministry, preaching a message of love, tolerance, compassion and peace.
- Faith healing, stories of miracles.



J the Revolutionary

- (1) Rejected class distinctions.
- (2) Resisted Jewish Authority.
- (3) Resisted Roman Authority





I. Class Distinctions

Embraced the marginalized of society: (Lepers, disabled, prostitutes, etc.)

Rejected class distinctions:

- Clean, unclean
- Jew, Gentile
- Righteous, Sinner
- These were man-made, unnecessary barriers between people that had nothing to do with God's love.





2. Jewish Authority

- God = Not just punisher and judge of the wicked.
- God = Compassion, forgiveness and love of Man.
- Rejected the materialism and consumerism of his people.
- Rejected role of Pharisees as authorities on God.





3. Roman Authority

- Rejected Roman pagan culture.
- Rejected Roman bureaucracy and control of region (taxes, fines, secular law).
- Smith: “This made him a social prophet, challenging the boundaries of the existing order and advocating an alternative vision of the human community (322)”.



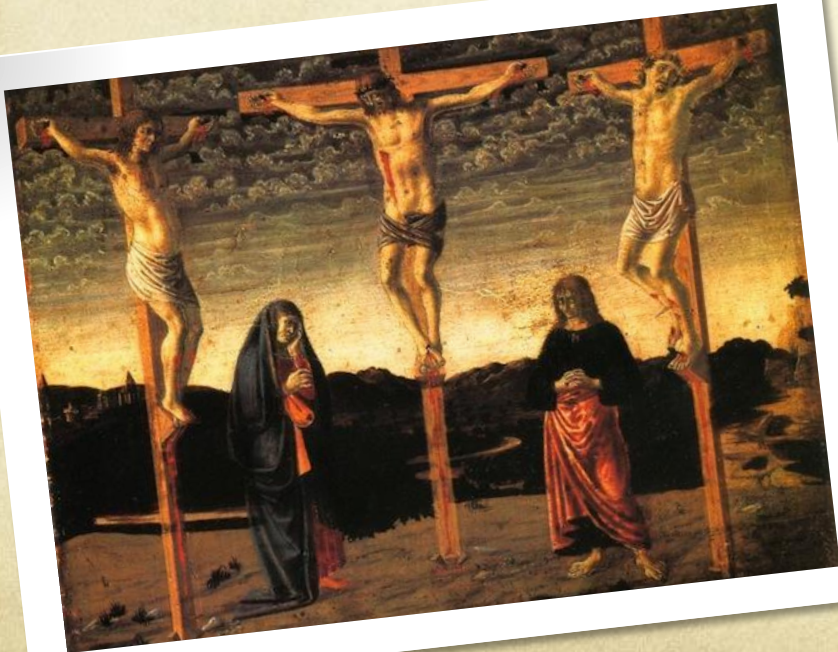


J the Martyr

(1) Jewish authorities begin to fear Jesus' growing reputation

(2) Romans want to maintain control of region

- Initially tell Pharisees to handle it and want no part of an uprising
- Eventually agree to punishing Jesus – Pontius Pilate

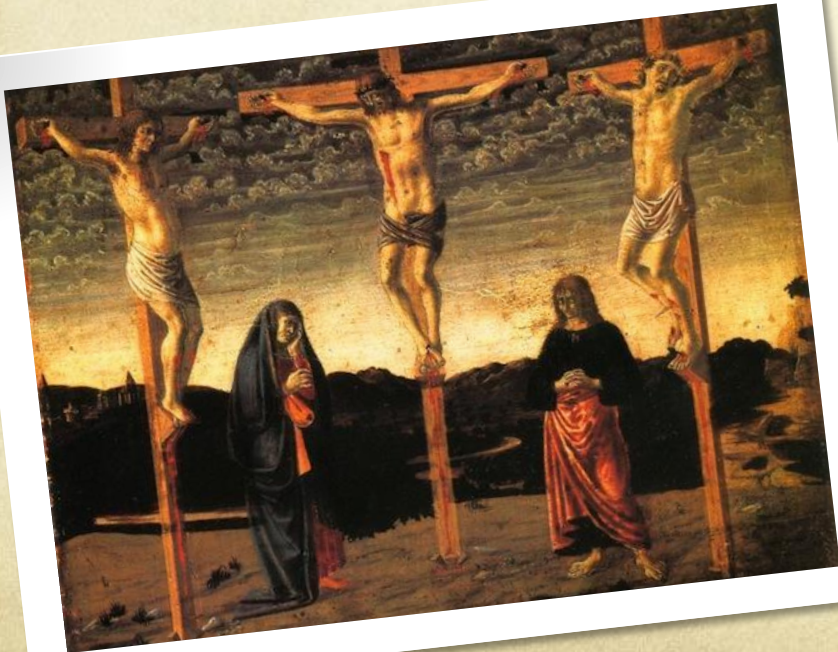




J the Martyr

(3) At 33, Jesus enters Jerusalem
(Palm Sunday)

- Greeted by many as the Messiah
- Enters a temple and kicks out the money-changers and vendors
- Spends next days preaching in the temple against the priests

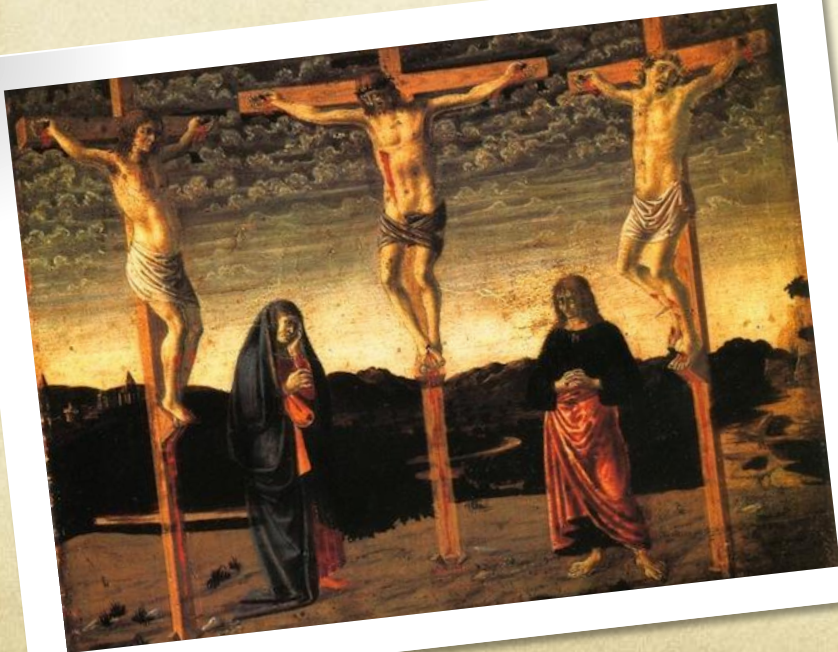




J the Martyr

(4) Romans and Jewish priests conspire to capture and execute Jesus and crucify him that same Friday.

- J is charged with treason for claiming divinity
- Punishment: Death by crucifixion

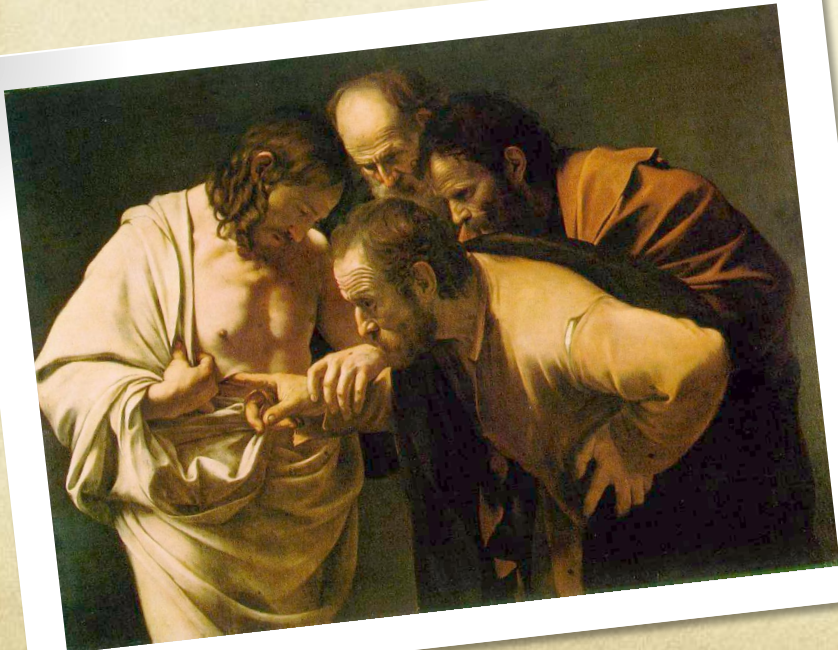




The Resurrection

After entombing Jesus on Friday, his body has disappears by Sunday.

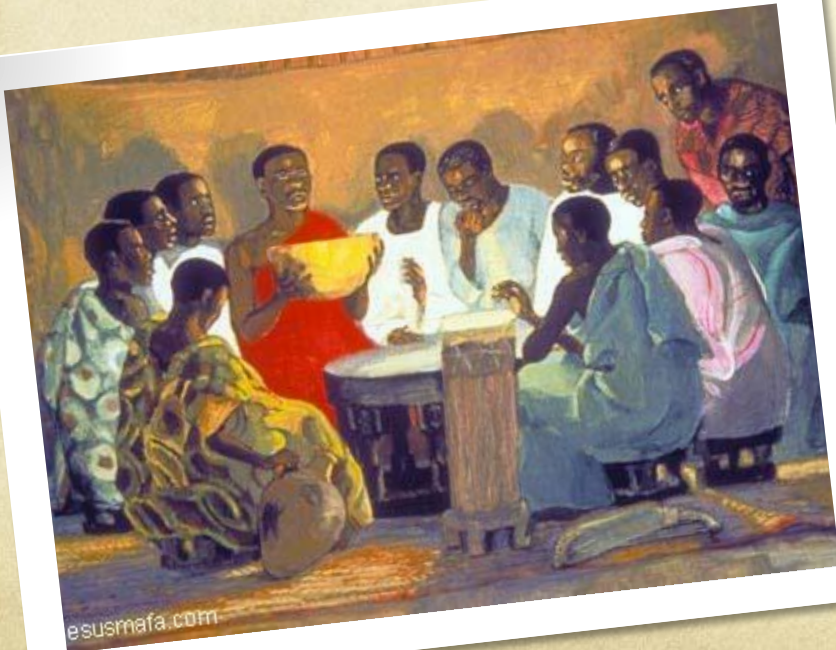
- He appears to Mary and his disciples.
- Appoints them to spread the word.
- Re-enters heaven to be with God.





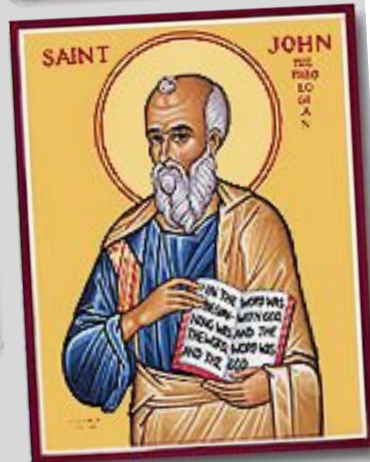
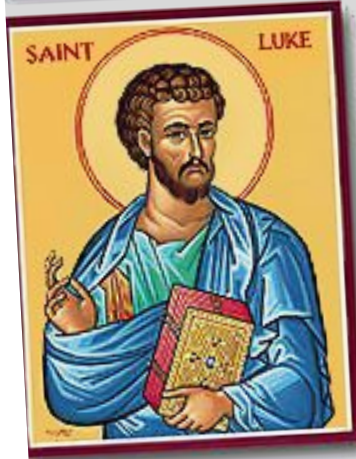
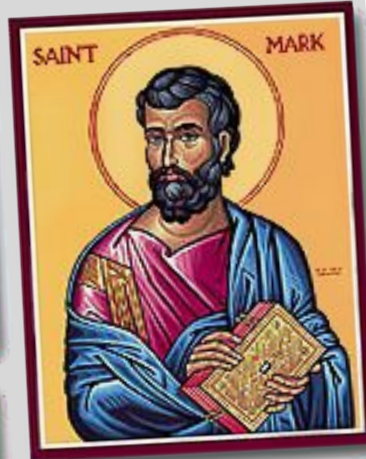
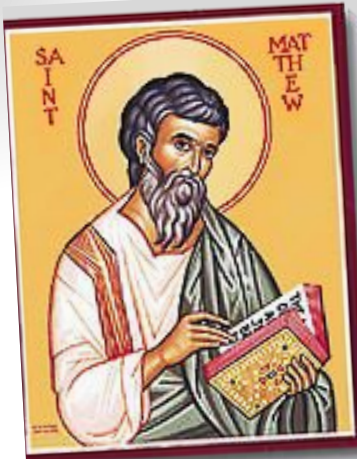
Birth of Christianity

- Many claiming to be Messiah in Jesus' time.
- Roman Response: Kill the leader, followers will scatter.
- Disciples' Response: Spread the gospel of Jesus.
 - Remember: Judaism doesn't actively seek converts.
 - Jesus removed the barrier of being "The Chosen People".

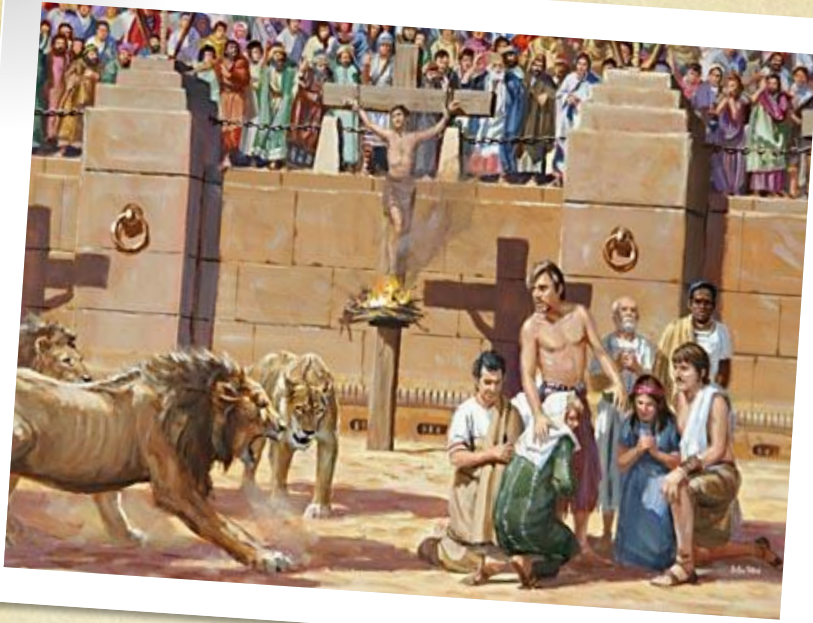


The Gospel “Good News”

- Jesus’ death atones for man’s sin.
- Praying in J’s name = access to God without the barrier of sin.
- J will return at the end of days and deliver the faithful to God.



Spread of Christianity



(1) Disciples spread through the region spreading the gospel.

(2) For 300 years, Christians persecuted for not worshipping Roman Emperor.

- Fed to lions.
- Beatings, stoning.
- Fish Symbol: Points toward secret meetings.
- Religion continues to grow.



Spread of Christianity



(3) 312 AD, Constantine becomes Roman Emperor.

(4) 313 AD, Edict of Milan legalizes Christianity.

(5) 323 AD, Nicene Council makes Christianity official religion of the Roman Empire.

- Disputes over books of NT.
- Rejected books burned and destroyed.
- Disputes over relationship of Jesus and God.
- Dissenters excommunicated.



Spread of Christianity

(6) 325 – 400 AD: Unification of Institution and Doctrine:

- God and Jesus are One.
- 4 Legitimate Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
- The priesthood is reserved for men only.
- Priests and nuns must remain celibate.
- Latin is the official language of the Church.
- Bishop of Rome is the head of the Church (The Pope).



The Roman Catholic Church (RMC)



(1) Peter is the official founder and 1st bishop of church.

(2) Pope is the ultimate authority on teachings of Jesus.

- Pope is guided by the holy spirit to ensure the perfection of his pronouncements.
- Immaculate Conception of Mary.
- Mary becomes saint.



The Roman Catholic Church (RMC)



(3) Holy Trinity:

- God, Jesus, Holy Spirit

(4) There is no salvation without the church.

- Only the church can give holy sacraments:
- Rituals that allow us to live in accordance with God's will.
- Ex. Baptism, Marriage, Confession, Communion, etc.





RMC Splits

- (1) RMC
- (2) Eastern Orthodox
- (3) Protestantism





Eastern Orthodox (1054 AD)

- Constantine sets up 2nd church in Istanbul (Turkey)
- Greek instead of Latin.
- Disagreed w/ Pope's interpretations of Christ.
- Disagreed w/ papal authority and celibacy.



Protestantism (1517AD)

Martin Luther:

(1) Direct connection b/w God and Man.

(2) Rejects RMC's indulgences:

- I sin, I pay penance, I am forgiven.

(3) God speaks to individuals through the Bible:

- Bible is the "Living Word"





Protestantism (1517AD)

(4) No requirement for church or need for papal authority

(5) Paul, not Peter, is the leader of the Church.

(6) Rejection of saints/idols outside of the holy trinity:

- God, Jesus, Holy Spirit.





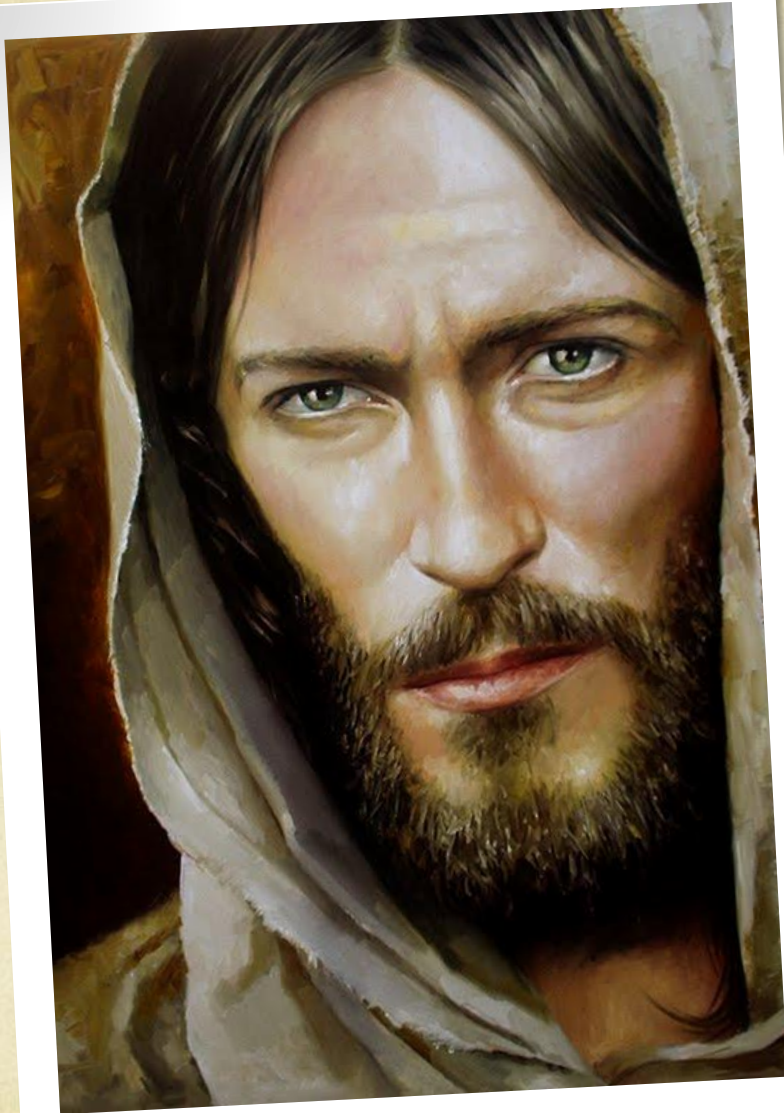
Protestantism (1517AD)

(7) Rejection of Celibacy

(8) Protestantism breaks off into many denominations throughout the world.

- Presbyterian
- Methodist
- Baptist
- Episcopalian
- Etc.



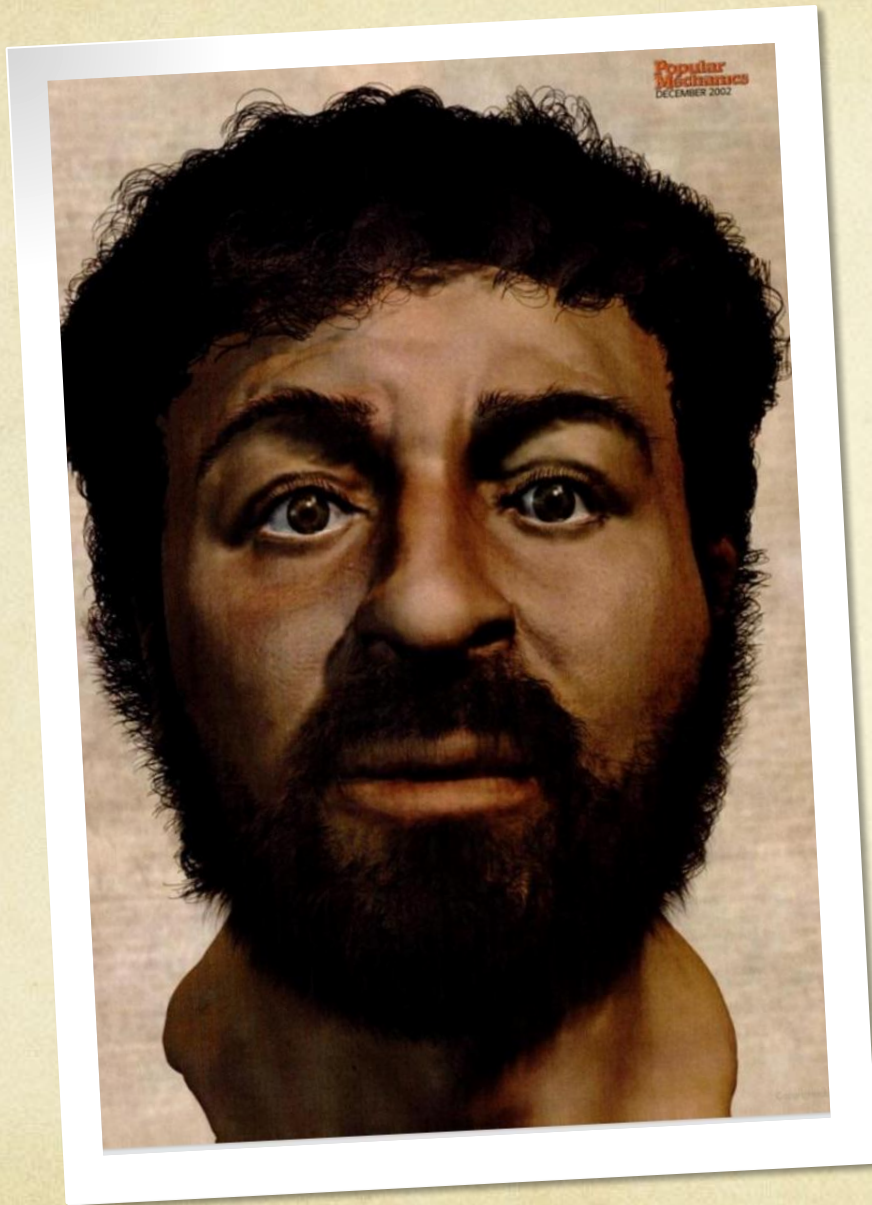


Recap

Basic Background

Story of John the Baptist

Jewish Society



Recap

Story of Jesus

The Birth and Spread of
Christianity

Christianity Splits

End of Christianity I