

The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 1 Early Christianity

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

What are the characteristics of a leader?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *How did the Jews respond to Roman rule?*
2. *Why were the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth important to his followers?*
3. *How did early Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire?*

Terms to Know

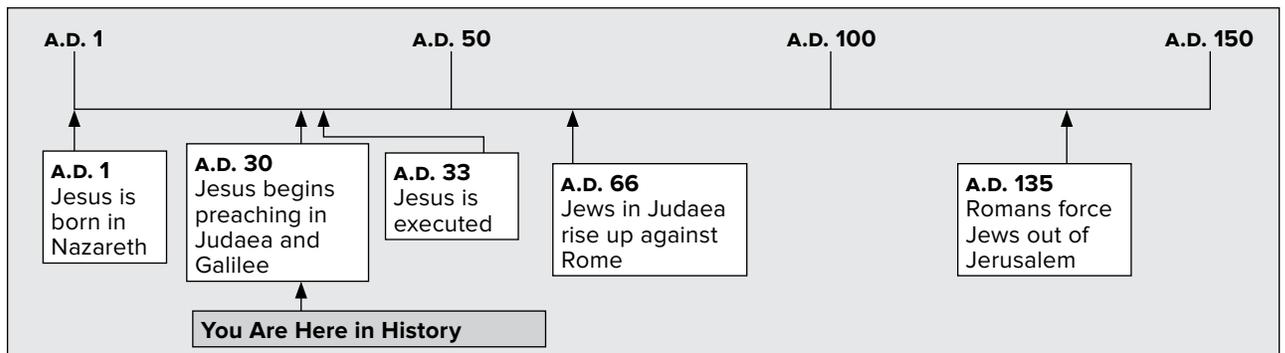
- parables** short stories that teach a lesson about good, or honorable, behavior
- resurrection** coming back to life from the dead
- apostle** Christian leader chosen by Jesus to spread his message
- salvation** the act of being saved from the effects of wrongdoing, or sin

Where in the world?



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When did it happen?

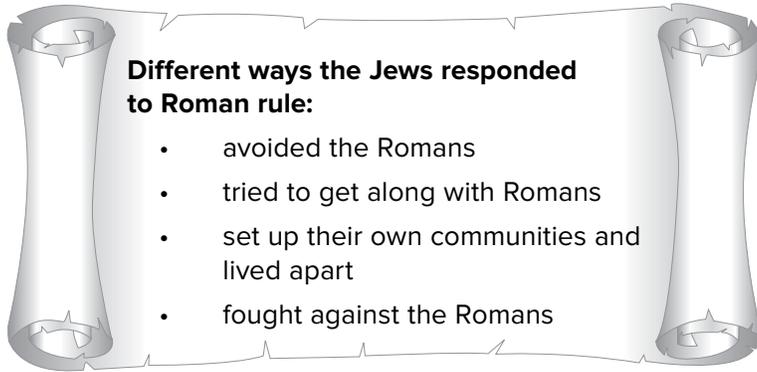


The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 1 Early Christianity, *Continued*

Judaism and Rome

The Roman Empire allowed Jews to practice their religion. However, in Judaea and Galilee, the Romans made life very difficult for Jews. The Romans replaced the Jewish king with a Roman governor. Many Jews hoped God would send someone to free them from Roman rule.



Different ways the Jews responded to Roman rule:

- avoided the Romans
- tried to get along with Romans
- set up their own communities and lived apart
- fought against the Romans

The Jews who lived in Judaea and Galilee had different ways of dealing with the Romans. One group of Jews wanted to fight the Romans in order to win their freedom. These Jews were called Zealots. In A.D. 66 they rose up against the Romans. The Romans crushed the uprising. Four years later, the Zealots took over an ancient mountain fort called Masada. For about two years, the Zealots held off a powerful Roman army. Eventually, the Romans defeated the Zealots.

In A.D. 132, the Jews again rose up against the Roman rulers. Once again they were defeated. This time the Romans forced the Jews out of Jerusalem and told them they could never return.

Jesus of Nazareth

Jesus was born in the small town of Nazareth in Galilee. In about A.D. 30, he began to preach in Galilee and Judaea. He traveled with a group of close followers called disciples.

Jesus was born and raised in a Jewish family. His teachings were based on the lessons of the Jewish religion. Jesus often preached using **parables**, short stories that made his ideas easier to understand. He taught that God created all people and loved them the way a father loves his children.

Jesus also preached that God was coming soon to rule the world. For this reason, Jesus told people they had to do more than follow the laws of their religion. He told them they must also love others and forgive them. His message strengthened Jewish teachings such as, "Love your neighbor as yourself."



Listing

1. List 3 ways the Jews responded to Roman rule.



Reading Check

2. How did the A.D. 132 revolt affect the Jews of Judaea?



Explaining

3. Why do you think Jesus used parables?

The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 1 Early Christianity, *Continued*

Analyzing

4. Why did leaders in Jerusalem arrest Jesus?

Drawing Conclusions

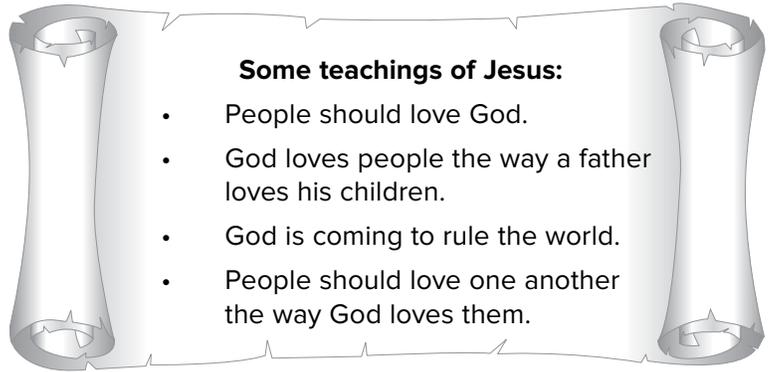
5. Why do you think Jesus traveled to Jerusalem when there was already so much tension between the Romans and the Jews?

Reading Check

6. How did Jesus reinforce traditional Jewish teachings?

Marking the Text

7. Underline the word *apostles* and its definition.



Some teachings of Jesus:

- People should love God.
- God loves people the way a father loves his children.
- God is coming to rule the world.
- People should love one another the way God loves them.

The Romans saw Jesus as a threat to their power. This was because more and more people began to believe in what Jesus was saying. The more his influence grew, the more dangerous he became in the eyes of Roman rulers.

In about A.D. 33, Jesus traveled with his disciples to the city of Jerusalem to celebrate the Jewish holy days of Passover. The Jews were tired of Roman rule and high taxes. The Romans were angry because the Jews would not worship statues of the Roman emperor.

Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples. This event has come to be known as the Last Supper. After the meal, leaders in Jerusalem arrested Jesus. Jesus was accused of disloyalty to the Roman government. He was sentenced to death by crucifixion. This meant he would be hung from a wooden cross until he died.

According to Christian belief, three days after Jesus died, he rose from the dead and appeared to some of his followers. The disciples of Jesus still thought of themselves as Jews. However, the message of his **resurrection**, or coming back from the dead, led to the birth of Christianity.

Who Were the Apostles?

The **apostles** were early Christian leaders who spread the teachings of Jesus after his death. People who accepted these teachings came to be known as Christians. Early Christians met in people's homes. These gatherings were the first churches.

Two of the most influential leaders of the early Christian church were Peter and Paul. Tradition says that after Jesus died, Peter went to Rome and set up a Christian church.

The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 1 Early Christianity, *Continued*

Paul was an educated Jew. At first, he tried to stop Christianity from spreading. Then one day, according to Christian writings, Paul saw a great light and heard the voice of Jesus. After this experience, Paul became a Christian. He spent the rest of his life spreading the message of Jesus.

Facts about the Apostles Peter and Paul	
Peter	Paul
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fisher • Became a disciple of Jesus • Went to Rome and set up a Christian church 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An educated Jew • Opposed Christianity • Became a Christian after seeing a light and hearing the voice of Jesus

Christianity grew out of Judaism. Christians believe in the God of Israel. However, they came to believe in God in a new way.

First, Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God. Another Christian belief concerns **salvation**. Christians believe that people who accept Jesus will be saved from their sins, or wrongdoings. After they die, they will one day be resurrected the way Jesus was and enter heaven. Another Christian belief is the Trinity, which means “three.” In Christian teaching, this refers to the three persons of God: the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Check for Understanding

List two different ways the Jews responded to Roman rule.

1. _____
2. _____

List the names of two early Christian leaders who helped spread Christian teachings.

3. _____
4. _____



Contrasting

8. Describe two basic Christian beliefs.



Reading Check

9. Why were the apostles important to early Christians?



10. Place a two-tab Foldable to cover the Check for Understanding. On the anchor tab, write *Memory Map*. Label the tabs *Jews under Roman Rule* and *Early Christian Leaders*.

In words or short phrases, record what you remember about each. Use your notes to answer the Check for Understanding.

The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 2 The Early Church

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do religions develop?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *How did Christianity change over time?*
2. *How did early Christians organize their church and explain their beliefs?*

Terms to Know

martyr someone who is willing to die rather than give up his or her beliefs

hierarchy an organization with different levels of authority

clergy church officials

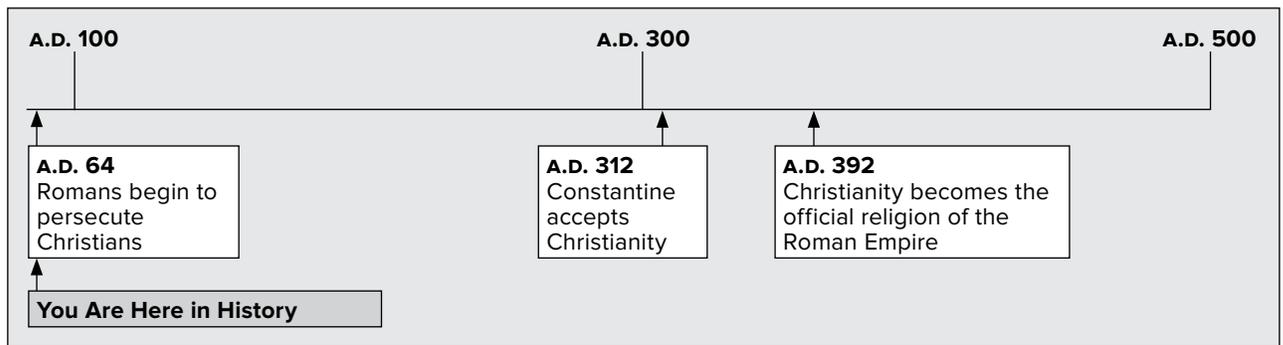
laity regular church members

doctrine official church teaching

gospel an account of the life and teaching of Jesus, written by the apostles

pope the title for the bishop of Rome, who is the head of the Roman Catholic Church

When did it happen?



What do you know?

In the first column, answer the questions based on what you know before you study. After this lesson, complete the last column.

Now...		Later...
	Why did the Romans punish people who became Christians?	
	How did Christians pass on the teachings of Jesus?	
	How is the Christian Church organized?	

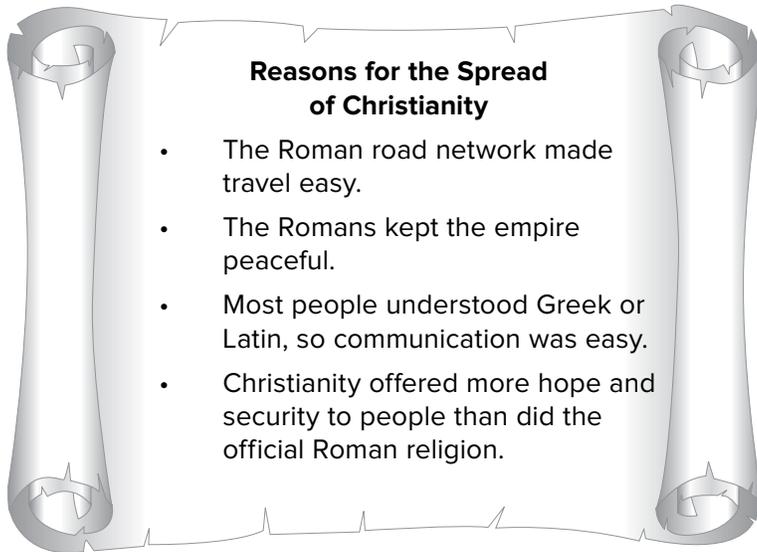
The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 2 The Early Church, *Continued*

Christianity and the Empire

The first followers of Jesus taught his messages to Jews and non-Jews in the Mediterranean region. From there Christianity spread throughout the Roman Empire. This happened for many reasons. A network of roads made long-distance travel fairly safe and easy. The people who lived under Roman rule spoke Latin or Greek. This made it easier for Christians to share their ideas.

Another reason for the spread of Christianity was that it appealed to people. Christianity promised a better life after death. It gave people hope, which the Roman religion did not do. Christian communities took care of the needs of their members.



Reasons for the Spread of Christianity

- The Roman road network made travel easy.
- The Romans kept the empire peaceful.
- Most people understood Greek or Latin, so communication was easy.
- Christianity offered more hope and security to people than did the official Roman religion.

The Romans tried to stop Christianity from spreading. Rome saw the new religion as a dangerous threat to its empire. Christians refused to worship the emperor as a god. They also refused to serve in the Roman army and were against war. For these and other reasons, Christians were arrested, beaten, and sometimes killed. Some Christians became **martyrs**, people who are willing to die rather than give up their beliefs.

In the early A.D. 300s, the emperor Diocletian made one last attempt to destroy Christianity. He failed because Christianity had grown very strong.

In A.D. 312 the new religion took a major turn. The night before an important battle, the Emperor Constantine had a dream. In the dream he saw a flaming cross in the sky. The next day he had his soldiers paint the cross on their shields. After his army won the battle, Constantine believed the Christian God had helped him.



Explaining

1. Why did Christianity appeal to many people more than the old Roman religion?



Marking the Text

2. Underline the word *martyrs* and its definition.



Summarizing

3. Why did the Romans mistreat Christians?

The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 2 The Early Church, *Continued*

 **Reading Check**

4. How did Constantine support Christianity?

 **Defining**

5. How is a *hierarchy* organized?

 **Explaining**

6. How was Church doctrine decided?

Constantine became a strong supporter of Christianity. He built churches in Jerusalem and Rome. He let Christians serve in the government. Constantine also excused Christians from paying taxes. Soon, Christians began to join the military. In A.D. 313, Constantine issued the Edict of Milan. This important order gave religious freedom to all religions in the empire, including Christianity.

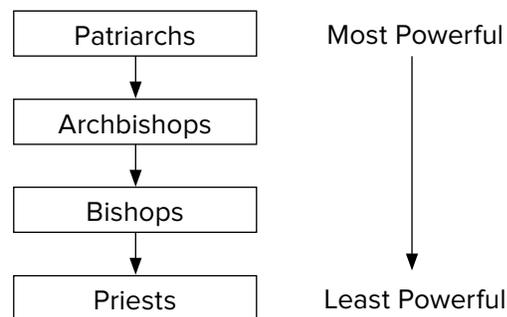
After Constantine's rule, the emperor Theodosius outlawed Greek and Roman religions. In A.D. 392, he made Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire. During this time, Christianity also spread to the Kingdom of Axum in East Africa.

Organizing the Church

The early Christian church had to become better organized in order to unite its many followers. It also had to make sure that Christian communities shared similar beliefs and practices. Early church leaders used the Roman Empire as a model. Like the empire, the church was ruled by a **hierarchy** of officials. A hierarchy is an organization with different levels of authority.

Leaders of the church were known as the **clergy**. Regular church members were called the **laity**. In the hierarchy of clergy, archbishops had the most authority. Priests had the least. Each of the five most powerful archbishops were in charge of an entire city. These leaders were called patriarchs.

Hierarchy of the Early Christian Church



The bishops decided the true teachings of the Church. Accepted teachings became **doctrine**. Teachings that went against the Christian faith were called heresies.

The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 2 The Early Church, *Continued*

Church leaders also preserved stories about Jesus and the writings of the apostles. By A.D. 300 there were four accepted accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus. Christians believed four apostles of Jesus wrote these accounts, or **gospels**. The word gospel means “good news.” The New Testament includes all four gospels and the writings of early Christians. What Christians call the Old Testament is the Greek version of the Jewish sacred writings. The Christian Bible consists of the Old Testament and the New Testament.



Two of the most influential early Christian writers were Paul and Augustine. Paul’s writings are part of the New Testament. Augustine is one of the Church Fathers. These writers and thinkers played an important role in explaining and defending the teachings of Christianity.

As the Church grew, the bishop of Rome came to believe he had authority over all the other bishops. By A.D. 600, the bishop of Rome had the title of **pope**. *Pope* is from a Latin word that means “father.” Christians in the western part of the Roman Empire accepted the pope as the head of all the churches. These Christians spoke Latin. Their churches formed the Roman Catholic Church.

Christians in the eastern part of the empire spoke Greek. They did not believe the pope had authority over them. Their churches became the Eastern Orthodox Church.

Check for Understanding

List two major events that changed Christianity.

1. _____
2. _____

List two ways early Christians explained their beliefs and teachings.

3. _____
4. _____

Drawing Conclusions

7. The four gospels were written many years after the death of Jesus. How were people able to remember what Jesus did and said before the gospels were written?

Reading Check

8. What writings are included in the New Testament?



9. Place a two-tab Foldable to cover the Check for Understanding. Label the top tab *The Government and Christianity* and the bottom tab *Explaining Christianity*.

Use both sides of the tabs to record words or phrases about each.

The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 3 A Christian Europe

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

How do new ideas change the way people live?

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. *What issues divided the western and eastern Christian churches?*
2. *How did Christianity spread across Europe?*

Terms to Know

icon a painting of Jesus, Mary (the mother of Jesus), saints, or Christian holy people

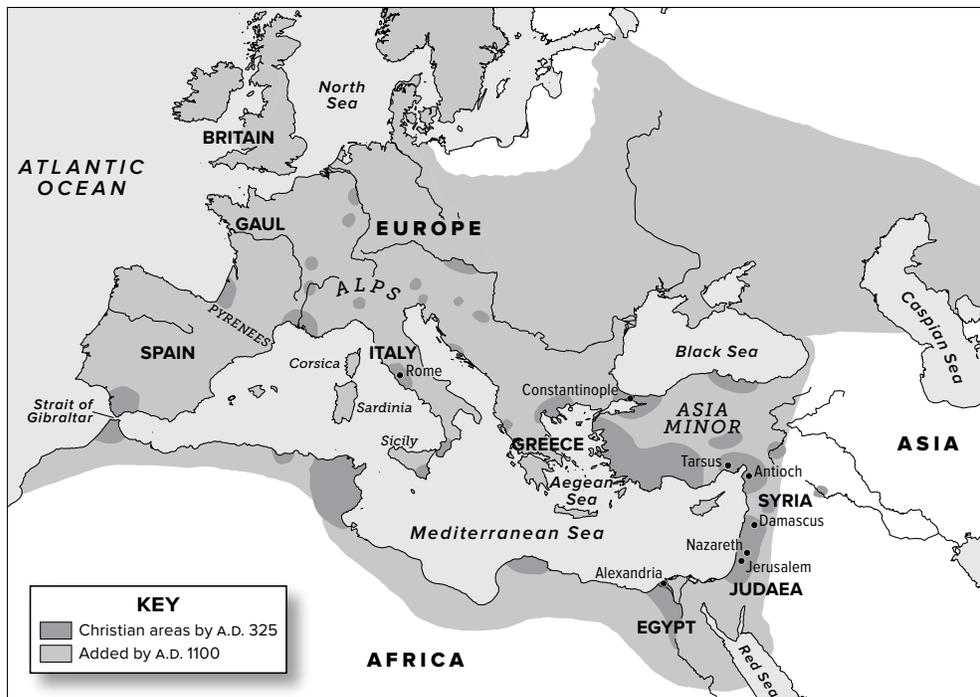
iconoclast originally: a person who destroys icons; today: someone who criticizes traditional beliefs or practices

excommunicate to declare that a person or group no longer belongs to the church

schism separation or division

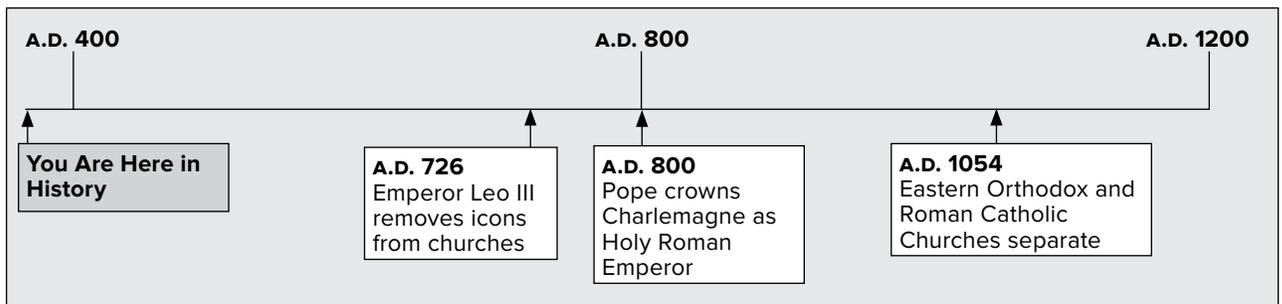
monastery a religious community

Where in the world?



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When did it happen?



The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 3 A Christian Europe, *Continued*

Two Christian Churches

The eastern part of the Roman Empire became known as the Byzantine Empire. The Byzantine church was Christian. It was called the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Eastern Orthodox Church and the Byzantine government worked together. The Byzantine emperor was in charge of the Church. He was seen as God’s representative on Earth.

Within the Eastern Orthodox Church, there was conflict over the use of **icons**. Icons are paintings of Jesus, the apostles, and Christian holy people called saints. Some people thought icons helped explain Church teachings. Others felt that the icons were a form of idol worship forbidden by God. In A.D. 726, Emperor Leo III ordered the removal of icons from all Christian churches. Officials who carried out this order were called **iconoclasts**. Many church leaders, including the pope in Rome, did not agree with Leo’s actions.

The use of icons was one of several issues that divided the Roman Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. The most serious issue was about church authority. The pope in Rome believed he was in charge of all Christian churches. The Byzantines did not accept this. They believed the patriarch of Constantinople and other Byzantine bishops had as much power as the pope.

In the late A.D. 700s, a foreign army invaded Italy. The pope asked the Byzantine emperor for help. The emperor refused. The pope then turned to a Germanic people called the Franks. They successfully defended Rome and drove out the invaders. In return, the pope crowned their king, Charlemagne, emperor. This angered the Byzantines.

Issues Dividing the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches

- Use of icons
- Authority of the pope
- Byzantine emperor’s refusal to help defend Rome
- Church and government relationship.

Another issue that divided the two churches was their relationship with the government. In the Byzantine Empire the emperor had power over the church and the government. In the West, the pope claimed authority over all the governments and churches in Europe.



Identifying

1. Identify three characteristics of the Byzantine church.



Defining

2. What is an *icon*?



Identifying

3. In the Byzantine Empire, who had more power—the emperor or the patriarch of Constantinople?



Reading Check

4. What issues divided the eastern and western Christian churches?

The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 3 A Christian Europe, *Continued*



Explaining

5. What did monks and nuns do?



Comparing

6. How were Basilian Rule and Benedictine Rule similar?



Identifying

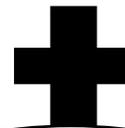
7. How did monks and nuns help spread Christianity?

The differences between the two churches were so serious that in A.D. 1054 their leaders **excommunicated**, or cast out, each other. This resulted in a **schism**, or separation, between the two churches that remains today.

The Spread of Christianity

During the A.D. 300s, Christians in the Eastern Roman Empire formed **monasteries**. These were religious communities where men called monks spent much of their days praying and studying. They also worked outside the monasteries. In nearby towns and villages, monks ran schools and hospitals and helped the poor.

Christian women could join convents, which were similar to monasteries. As nuns, these women served the poor and also spent time in prayer and study.



In the A.D. 300s, monks and nuns:

- Studied and prayed in their religious communities
- Ran schools and hospitals in towns and villages
- Helped the poor
- Helped spread Christianity in Europe

Eastern monasteries and convents followed a set of rules created by the Greek bishop Basil. The Basilian Rule told men and women how they were supposed to live in their religious communities. Western monasteries and convents followed the Benedictine Rule, which was created by an Italian monk named Benedict. In general, monks and nuns were expected to pray, study, live simple lives, and perform good deeds.

One of their major duties was to help spread Christianity. They did this by working as missionaries. Missionaries teach their religion to people who are not believers.

Two Byzantine missionaries, brothers Cyril and Methodius, wanted to bring Christianity to the Slavs in Eastern Europe. The Slavs spoke very different languages. Cyril invented a new alphabet that made it possible to translate the Bible into Slavic

The Rise of Christianity

Lesson 3 A Christian Europe, *Continued*

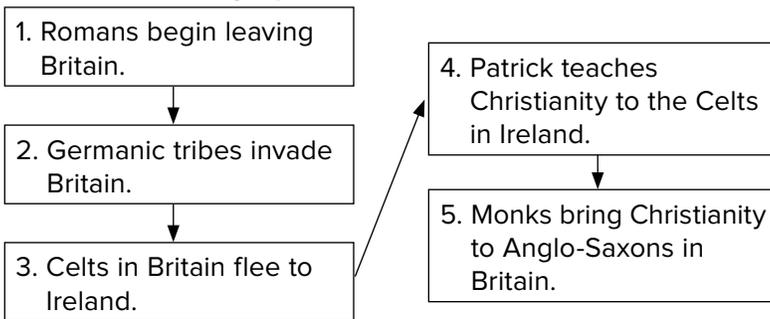
languages. It is called the Cyrillic alphabet in honor of Cyril. It is still used today by people who speak Slavic languages, such as Russian.

In Western Europe, Christian missionaries did much of their work in Britain and Ireland. After the Romans left Britain, Germanic tribes invaded from present-day Germany and Denmark. The tribes included people called the Angles and the Saxons. Over time, they became the Anglo-Saxons. They lived in Angeland, or England.

The people who were already living in Britain were the Celts. Many of them were driven across the sea to Ireland after the Anglo-Saxons arrived. A priest named Patrick spread Christianity to Ireland. He set up churches and monasteries and converted many people to Christianity.

In A.D. 597, about 40 monks from Rome went to Britain. Their mission was to bring Christianity to the Anglo-Saxons of Britain. They succeeded. Within about 100 years, most of England had become Christian.

Christianity Spreads to Britain and Ireland



Check for Understanding

List two major issues that divided the Eastern and Western Christian churches.

1. _____
2. _____

How did Christianity spread to Britain and Ireland?

3. _____

Examining Details

8. How did the missionary brothers Cyril and Methodius spread Christianity to the Slavs?

Reading Check

9. Why were monasteries and convents important in Christian Europe?



10. Place a two-tab Foldable along the dotted line to cover Check for Understanding. Label the top tab *Church Division* and the bottom tab *Missionaries*.

Use both sides of the Foldable to record words or phrases about each.