

# Spread of Christianity

- offshoot of Jewish religion
- founded in Judea (Palestine)  
modern day "Middle East"
- named after real historical figure named Jesus Christ  
(he was born during reign of Augustus, he died during reign of 2nd emperor Tiberius)
- 8 BC to 25 AD

1. Taught virtues of humility, charity and brotherly love
  2. These virtues were seldom a part of the Greek or Roman world
  3. Roman/Greek gods were selfish, immoral, and often uncaring
- Christian God was forgiving and promised a better life after death

4. Christian views of helping others contrasted w/ Roman concepts of individual as the most important

4. Attractive to plebeian class and slaves, and women

5. Christianity also opposed suicide, exposure of newborns, adultery, & crimes against fellow man

6. Christians refused to recognize Roman Emperors as "divine", this is what got them into real trouble

7. Roman Emperors always feared a large scale Christian revolt.

## Importance

- Persecutions against Christians occurred
- Christians forced "underground," literally  
Catacombs of Rome
- Importance of martyrs  
(those who died for their beliefs)  
they became examples and role models that others could look up to

- Concept of "Free Will"
  - a person is responsible for their own conduct... God rewards or punishes based on persons exercise of free will
- Concept of "Equal Rights"
  - all are equal in eyes of God
  - argument for womens rights
  - argument against slavery
- Concept of "Natural Rights"
  - certain rights come from God not from man