

History of Christianity

The background of the slide is a photograph of the interior of a Gothic cathedral. The image shows a series of tall, slender piers supporting a complex network of ribbed vaults that reach high into the sky. The light is warm and golden, likely from the sun streaming through the stained glass windows, which are partially visible on the right side. The overall atmosphere is one of grandeur and historical depth.

- **Christian history begins with Jesus of Nazareth, a Jew who was born in a small corner of the Roman Empire.**



- **Little is known of his early life, but around the age of 30, Jesus was baptized by John the Baptist and had a vision in which he received the blessing of God.**



- **After this event, he began a ministry of teaching, healing, and miracle-working. He spoke of the "kingdom of God," condemned religious hypocrites and interpreted the Mosaic law in realistic ways.**



- **Jesus spoke before crowds of people, but also chose 12 disciples whom he taught in Israel. They eagerly followed him everywhere, listened to his teaching about how to follow the long-awaited Messiah. They thought he would quickly bring in the future kingdom of God on earth.**



At the Cross

- After just a few years, however, opposition from the rulers mounted against Jesus words, and he was executed by crucifixion by the priest that was accusing him to the Romans.



AFTER the DEATH of JESUS

- **Most of Jesus' followers scattered, dismayed at such an unexpected outcome.**
- **But three days later, women who went to prepare his dead body reported that the tomb was empty ...and an angel told them Jesus had risen from the dead.**
- **The disciples began to understand, when he appeared to them. They reported many times that Jesus appeared to them.**
- **After 40 days... they watched him go up into the sky, saying to tell everyone His words.**



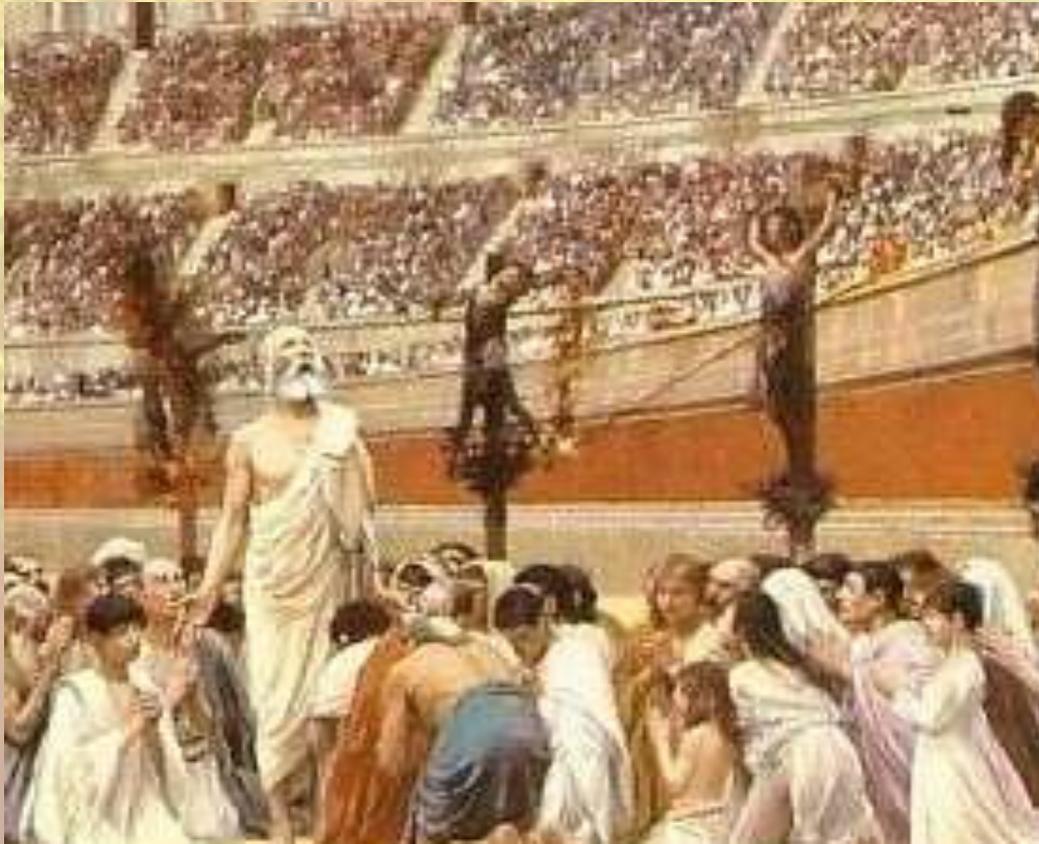


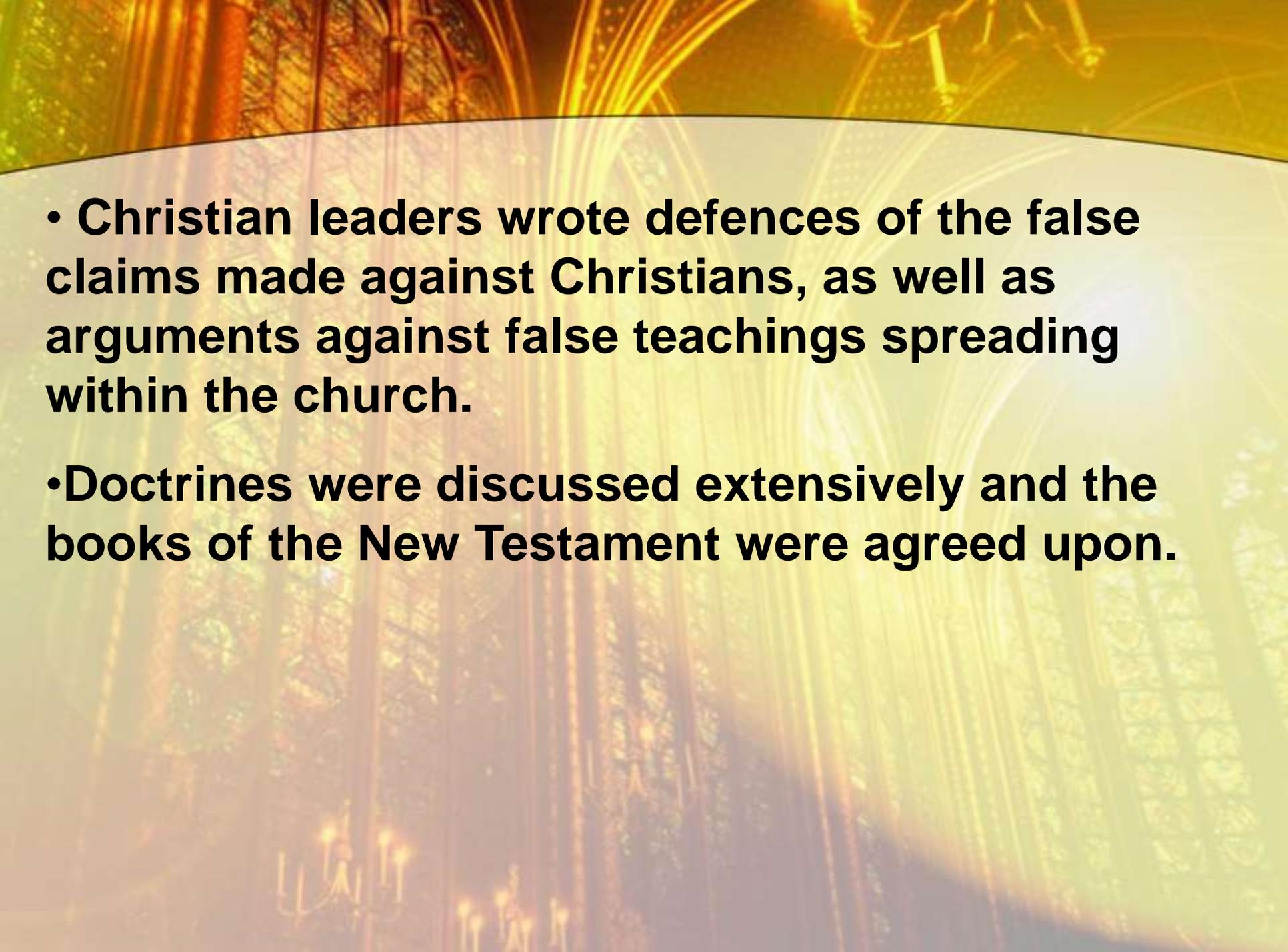
- The remainder of the first century AD saw the number of Jesus' followers, who were outside of Israel called "Christians," grow rapidly.
- Instrumental in the spread of these beliefs was a man named Saul, a highly trained teacher...who had killed Christians, then converted to the faith after seeing a vision of the risen Jesus. He said his new name was 'Paul.'

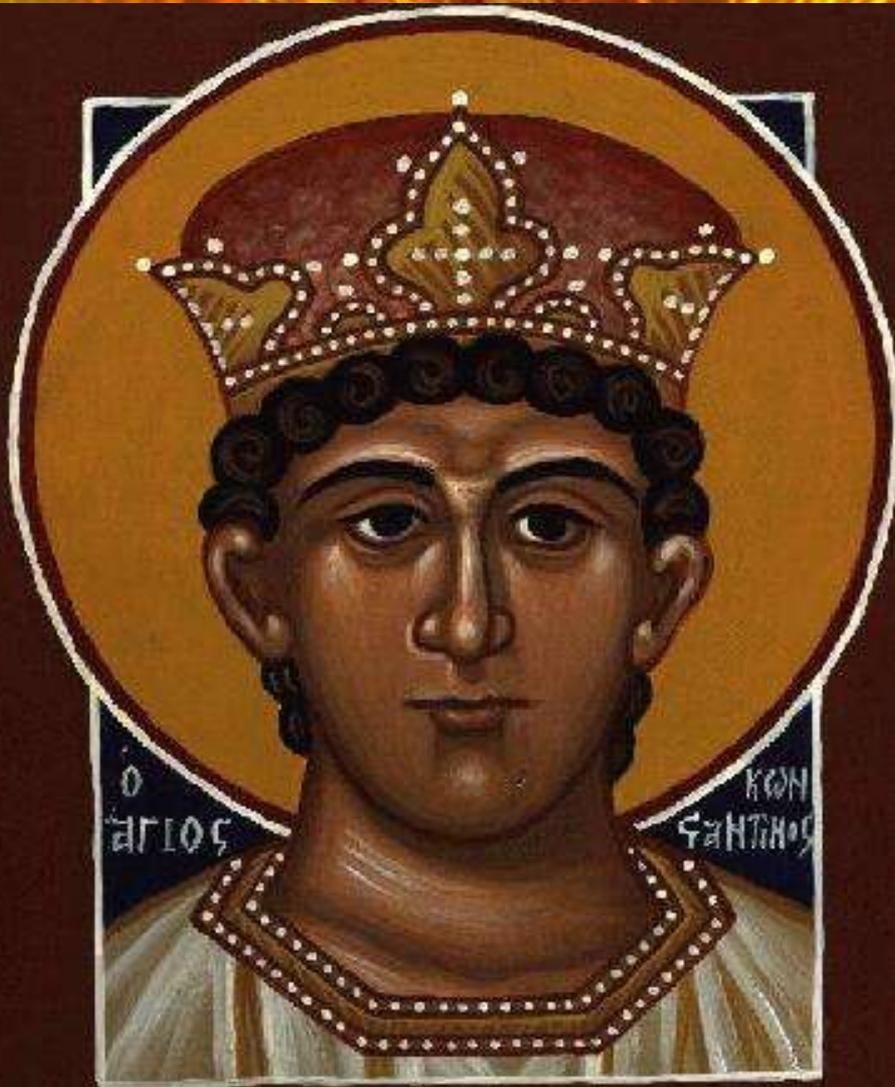
- Taking advantage of the extensive system of Roman roads and the time of peace, 'Paul' went on numerous missionary journeys throughout the Roman Empire. He started meeting places (now called churches), then wrote letters back to them to offer advice and encouragement. Many of these letters would become a small part of the Christian writings (scriptures), of the "New Testament."



- **Between 100 – 200CE, Christians struggled against Roman government....and also debates from within churches: Saturday or Sunday rest? These split the churches from it's Jewish origin.**

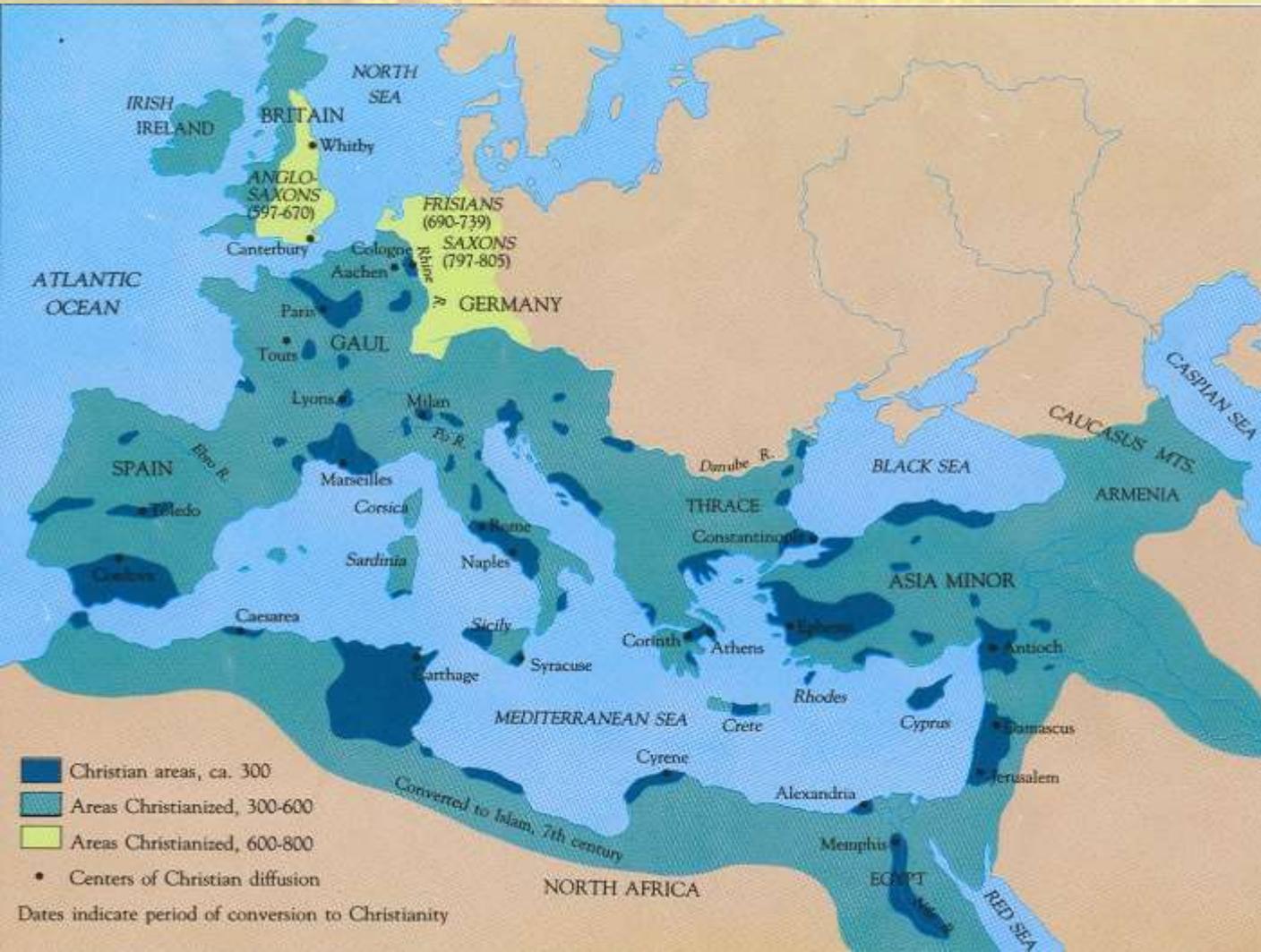


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- **Christian leaders wrote defences of the false claims made against Christians, as well as arguments against false teachings spreading within the church.**
 - **Doctrines were discussed extensively and the books of the New Testament were agreed upon.**



- A major turning point in Christian history came in the early 303 AD, when the Roman Emperor Constantine claimed that he wanted to be a Christian, and started the 'Roman' Church.

The Christian religion became legal, persecution ceased, and thousands of pagans now found it convenient to convert to the emperor's faith.



As part of the Roman Empire, Christianity gradually rose in power and would encompass the entire western world in the Middle Ages and Renaissance.

- **Emperor Constantine hoped Christianity would be the uniting force of his empire.**
- **However, The Roman Churches disputed over the “nature” of Jesus. He is God...or less than God?but better than just a mortal man.**

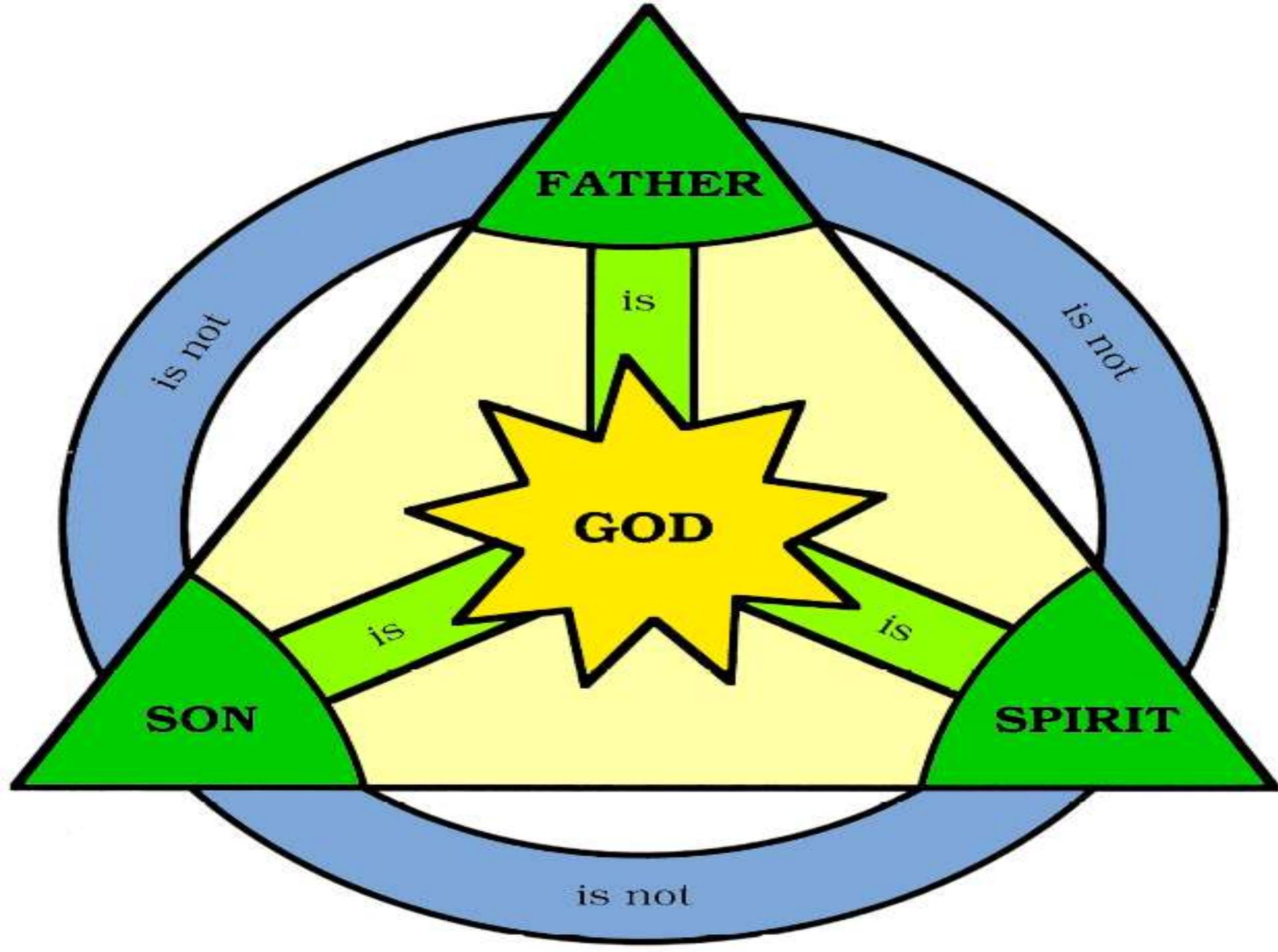


- **In 325 AD, Constantine called the Council of Nicea so that the bishops could work out their differences.**

The Nicene Creed

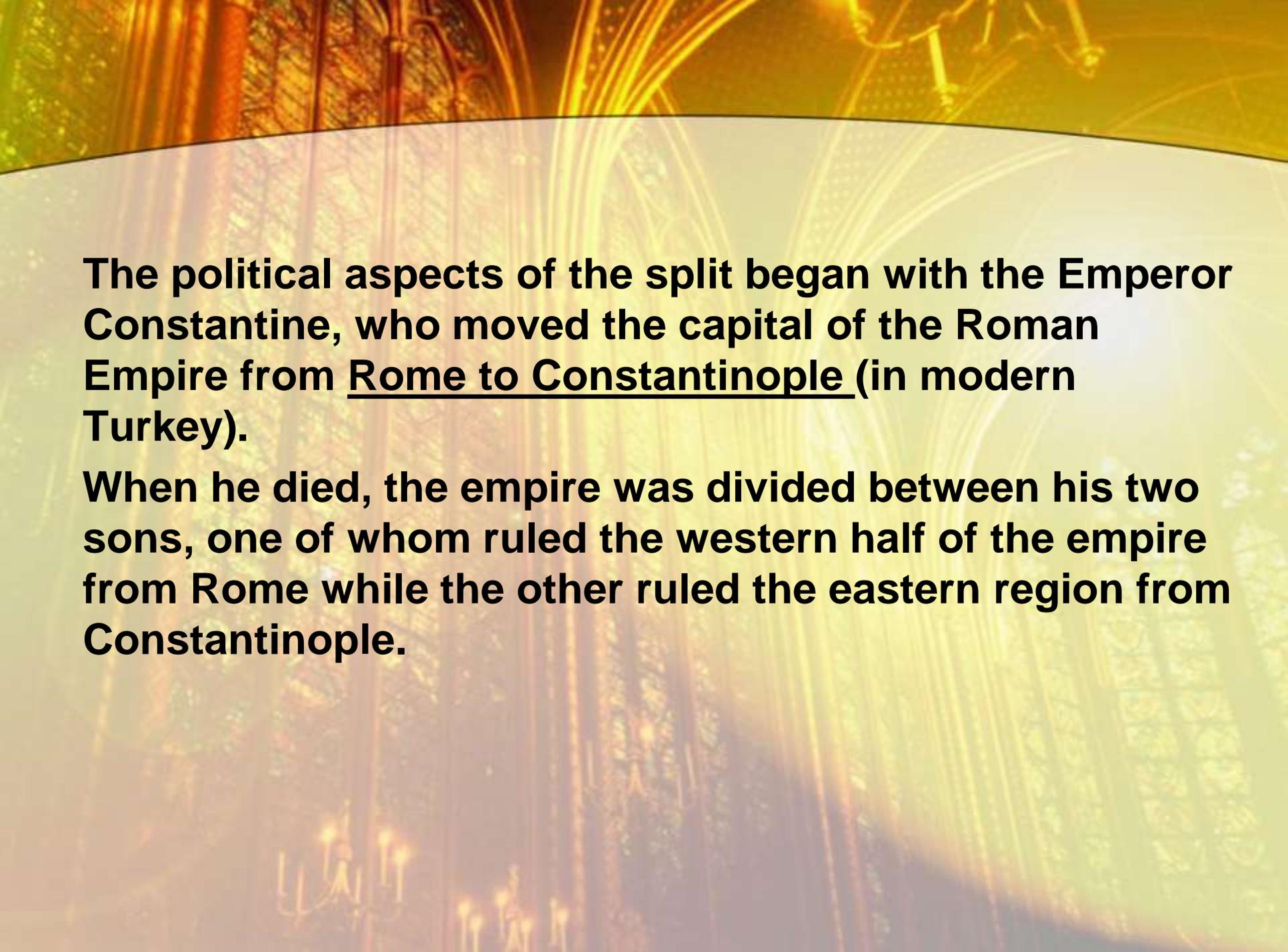
**We believe in one God,
the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen. We believe in one Lord,
Jesus Christ,
the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, light from light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation
he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the
dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of
life,
who proceeds from the Father [and the Son],
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and
glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of
sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**



- **In the meantime, the religious, cultural, and political differences between the Eastern and Western churches were starting to show in a big way.**
- **Religiously, the two parts of Christendom had different views on topics such as the use of icons, the nature of the Holy Spirit, and the date on which Easter should be celebrated.**



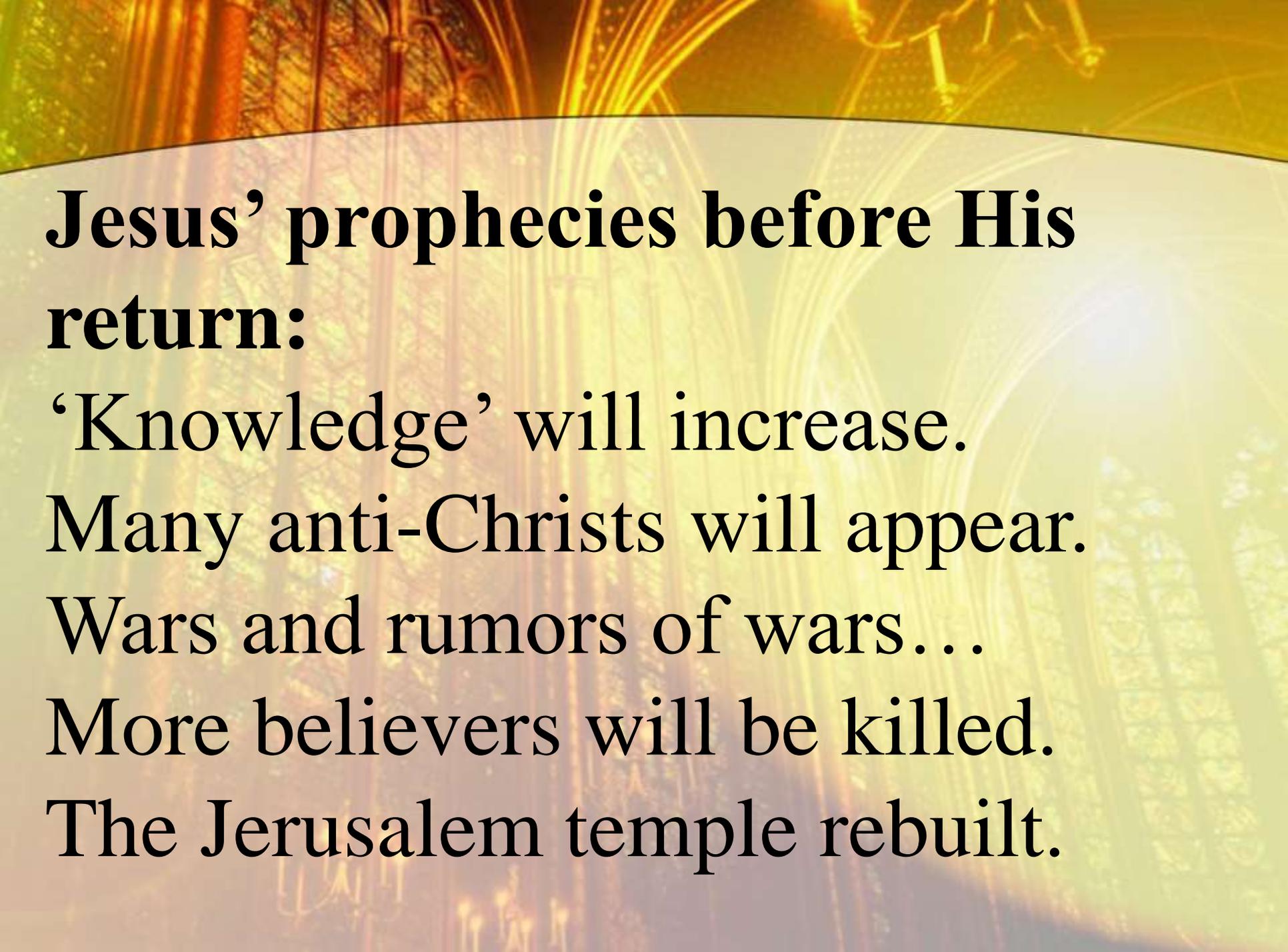


The political aspects of the split began with the Emperor Constantine, who moved the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to Constantinople (in modern Turkey).

When he died, the empire was divided between his two sons, one of whom ruled the western half of the empire from Rome while the other ruled the eastern region from Constantinople.

- The final argument was in 1054 AD, when Pope Leo IX removed the leader of the Eastern Church in Constantinople.
- The leader condemned the Pope in return, and the Christian church has been officially divided into West ("Roman Catholic") and East ("Greek Orthodox") ever since.





Jesus' prophecies before His return:

‘Knowledge’ will increase.

Many anti-Christ's will appear.

Wars and rumors of wars...

More believers will be killed.

The Jerusalem temple rebuilt.