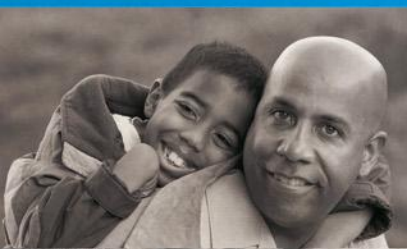
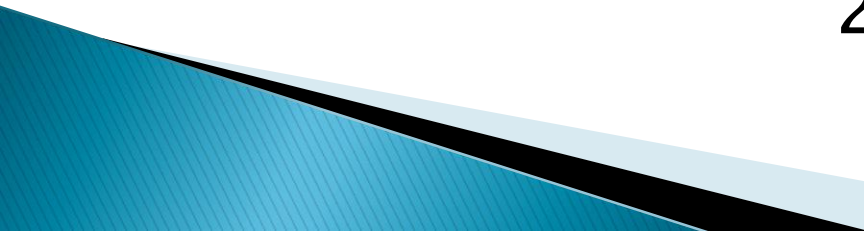


What is the Church

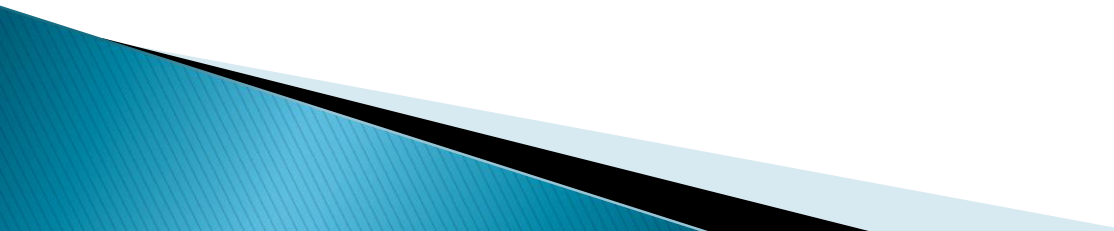


The Evolution of the Church
A Bible Study
By
Bishop Jerry F. Hutchins
Kingdom Now Church
Snellville, Ga.


Worship/Prayer gatherings in the Bible

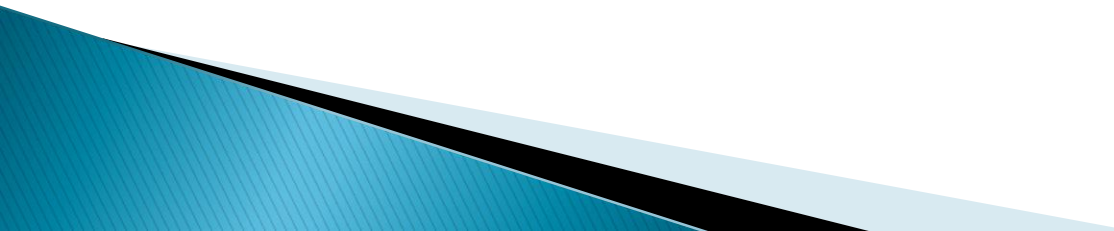
- ▶ Tabernacle/tent (Exodus 25:8)
 - ▶ Temple (1 Kings 6 (built 957 BC)
Destroyed 586 BC)
 - ▶ Synagogue (During exile and post
exile)
 - ▶ Temple (Zerubbabel built,
Herod finished, destroyed
70 AD)
 - ▶ Homes New Testament (Acts
2:46, 20:20)
- 

The First 300 Years of Christianity

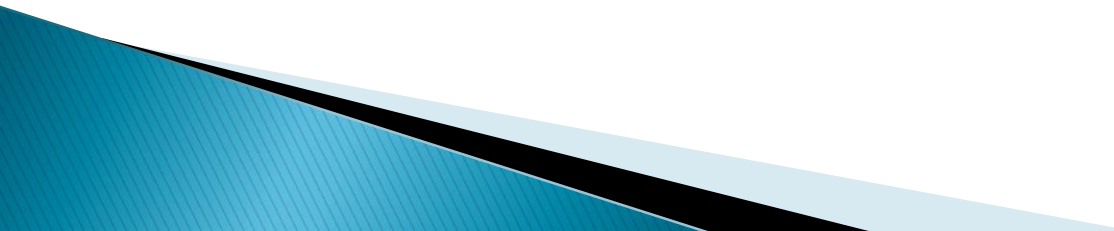
- ▶ For nearly three hundred years, Christianity was functionally illegal in the Roman Empire. Christians were subject to various levels of persecution, up to and including arrest or execution, depending on the decisions of the ruling politicians.
- 

The Great Persecution under Diocletian 284–305 AD

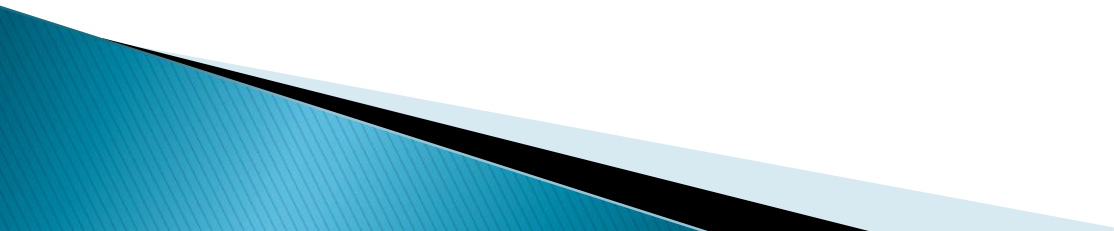
- ▶ Diocletian's goal was to wipe out the Church. He hunted down Christians to destroy them and their Scriptures.
 - ▶ He was trying to turn them back to paganism, to the old Roman religion with the emperor as a God. Therefore, anyone he caught and tried could be released by offering a sacrifice to the gods or to the emperor. They could also gain great favor by turning over copies of the Scriptures to be burned.
- 

- ▶ In addition, Diocletian destroyed any house church and confiscated their property.
 - ▶ It was a horrible, difficult time for Christians. Many Christians fell away, and many others were tortured, thrown in a dungeon, or put to death.
- 

Persecution under Galerius 304–311

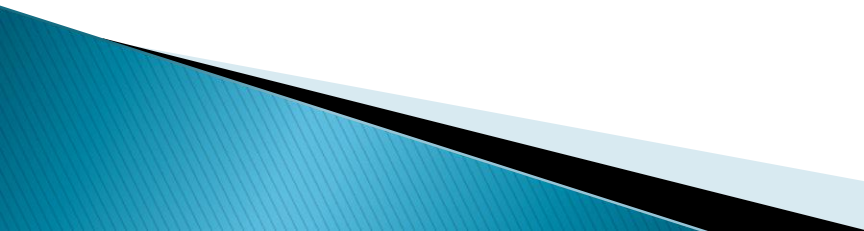
- ▶ Galerius issued another edict in 304 requiring everyone in the empire to sacrifice to the gods of the empire or face death or forced labor. Persecutors imprisoned churchmen, destroyed Bible manuscripts, and executed hundreds of Christians.
- 

Galerius turns

- ▶ He became ill. History records that his body rotted and was eaten by maggots while he suffered in agony.
 - ▶ Galerius connected his persecution of Christians with his misery and concluded that he was suffering because of what he had done to Christians.
- 

The Edict of Toleration

April 30, 311

- ▶ Galerius granted Christians forgiveness, freedom of worship and, implicitly, the status of an approved religion and he asked for the prayers of the Christian Church. Even though tolerance was granted, Christianity itself remained illegal.
- 

Constantine and the Edict of Milan

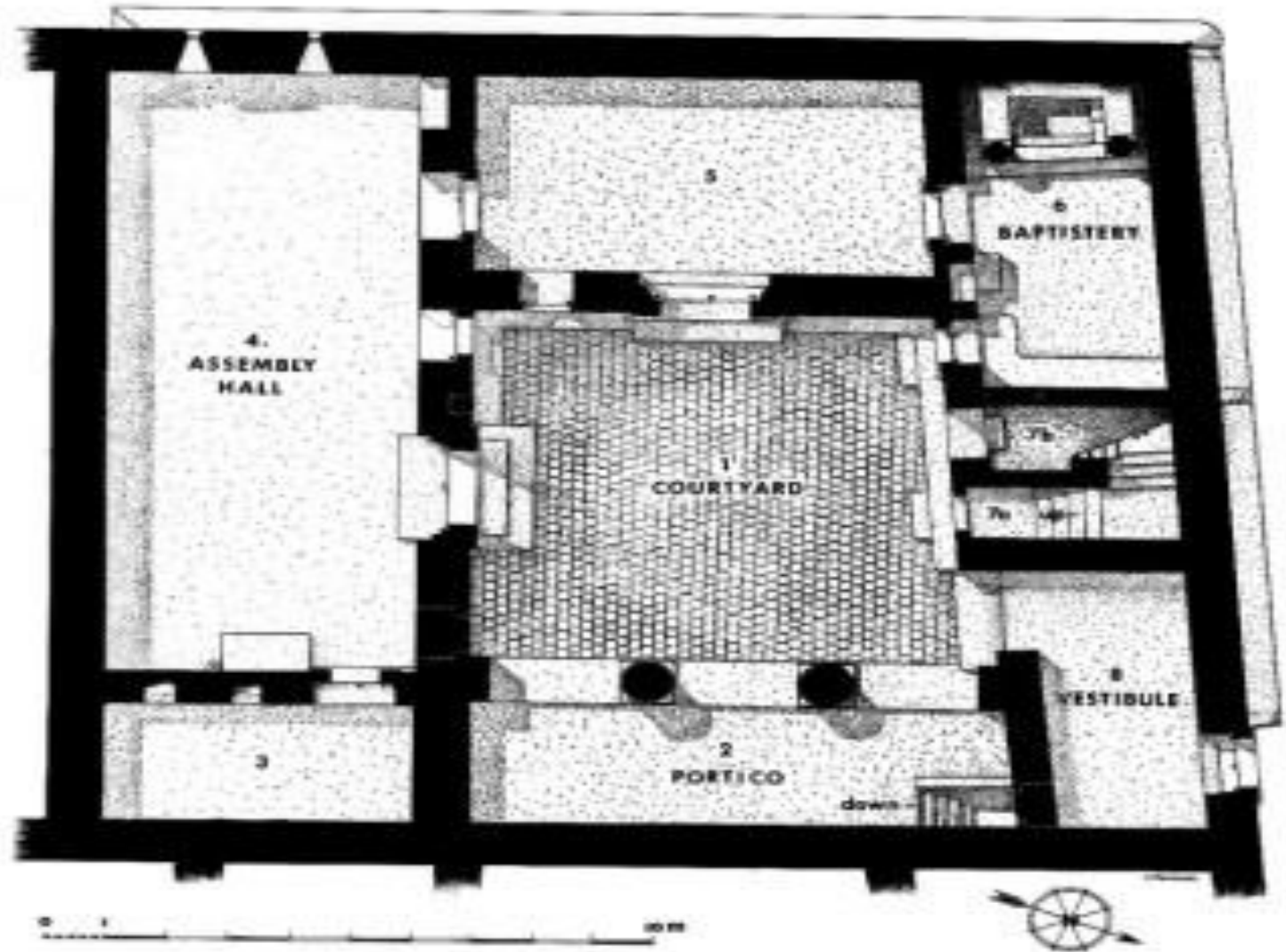
312 – 337

- ▶ In 313, the Western emperor, Constantine, met with his rival and counterpart, the Eastern emperor, Licinius, in the city of Milan, Italy. As part of their discussions, they issued a joint statement, later known as the **Edict of Milan**. This proclamation protected full rights for Christian citizens of the Empire, restoring their property, releasing them from prisons, and effectively banning government persecution of their faith. It also declared a general state of religious tolerance, allowing for the expression of virtually any spiritual belief.

From the secret house church to the public building

- ▶ In the house church, the focus was on the assembly.

House Church



- ▶ Basilicas were initially built as a place for public gatherings. Anything from marketplaces to army training could occur here. These buildings would frequently have high walls and large open spaces for audiences and transactions. Constantine the Great Christianized the Roman idea of a basilica into its modern day Christian architectural version. When looking at the types of architecture available, the basilica style caught his eye, partially because the style of the pagan temples that dotted the countryside were associated with pagans. Christianizing basilicas didn't change much in terms of their architectural content. Rather, they were built for the glory of God (and as a legacy to Constantine). The judges seat of a government basilica became the Bishop's chair in the church.

Romanesque Structure



Romanesque Focus

Middle Ages 476 to 1300

- ▶ Fortress (It was the place of escape and safety in the event of danger.)
- ▶ Towers (bells tolled for specific announcements)
- ▶ Crucifix on the wall

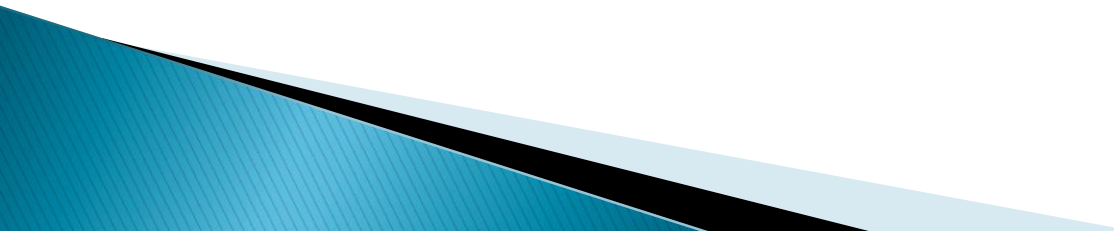
Symbol of strength and stability.
Churches built on this structure as a statement that “this is where hope and strength can be found because of the cross.

Gothic

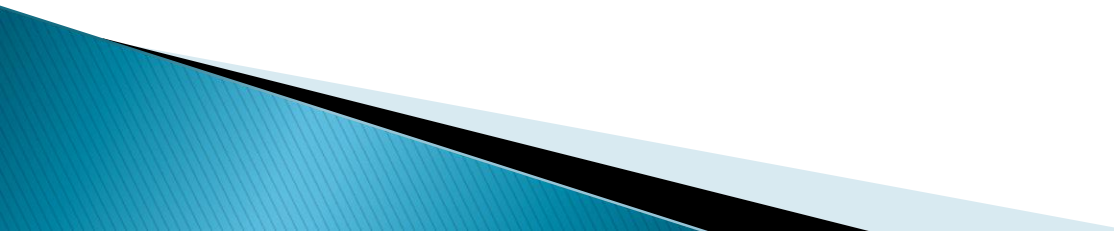
Late Middle Ages

1300 to 1500



- ▶ Stained Glass Windows (the windows were designed to address illiteracy of the people. The biblical stories were told in the paintings of the windows.
 - ▶ Lots of windows
 - ▶ Lots of lights
 - ▶ Very Tall
- 

After the Protestant Reformation

- ▶ **Baroque style**
 - ▶ **Characteristics.** The Baroque style is characterized by exaggerated motion and clear detail used to produce drama, exuberance, and grandeur in sculpture, painting, architecture, literature, dance, and music. The focus of the baroque style was on the pulpit and the Lord's table.
- 



The Modern Church

- ▶ The Bible does not mandate where we meet but it does mandate that we meet.

Hebrews 10:24–25

We are called out and called together
Acts 2:44 –47 is our model

Called together for:

- ▶ Fellowshiped together (2:44)
 - ▶ Gave together (2:45)
 - ▶ Ate together (2:46)
 - ▶ Grew together (2:47)
 - ▶ Praised God together (2:47a)
- 