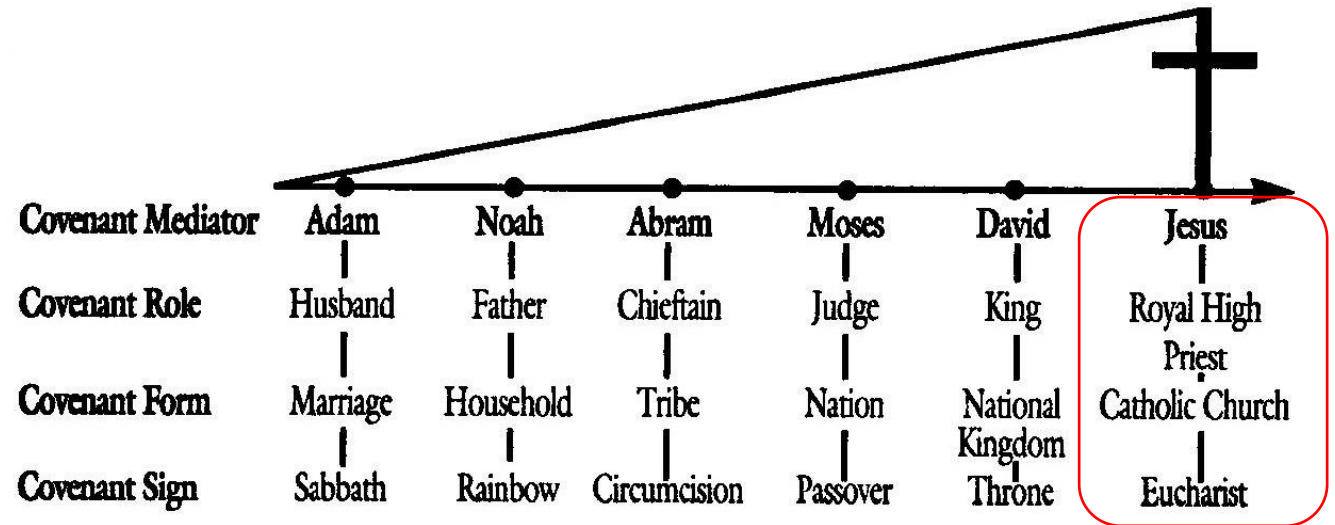




The History of Salvation 11

Covenants



The Keys of the Kingdom

- The kingdom is present through the ministry of the apostles.
- Jesus built his Church upon Peter.
- The Prime Minister has authority to “open” & “shut”. Authority resides in the office.
- The kingdom will be restored when they receive the Holy Spirit.
- Bear witness from Jerusalem, to Judea, to Samaria, “to the ends of the earth”.



Delivery of the Keys, Perugino, 1481. Public Domain

Jesus Explains the Scriptures

40 days teaching the disciples, explaining the Scriptures, speaking of the Kingdom of God; preparing them for their ministry (Acts 1:3).

- Emmaus:
 - "Beginning with Moses & all the prophets, He interpreted to them what referred to Him in all the Scriptures" (Lk 24:27).
 - The Eucharist, "He took bread, said the blessing, broke it & gave it to them" (Lk 24:30).
- Instructing the Apostles:
 - That night He appeared to the Apostles & "opened their minds to understand the Scriptures" (Lk 24:45).
 - He explained "everything written about Me in the Law of Moses & the prophets & the Psalms" (Lk 24:44).
 - He taught His Apostles how to interpret the Scriptures. As promised, He sent them "the Spirit of truth" to guide them "to all truth" (Jn 16:13).
- What the Apostles learned & continued to have revealed to them "in the breaking of the bread" appears throughout the New Testament & the Liturgy.

The New Testament is filled with Old Testament quotes & allusions.

The Apostles do what Jesus taught them: interpret the Old Testament, explain how the words & events of the past pointed to Jesus, the Messiah, the Word of God come in the flesh (Acts 8:26-39; John 1:14).

Addresses of St Peter (Acts 2:14-36; 3:12-26; 11:34-43); St Paul (Acts 13:16-41) & St Steven (Acts 7:1-51).



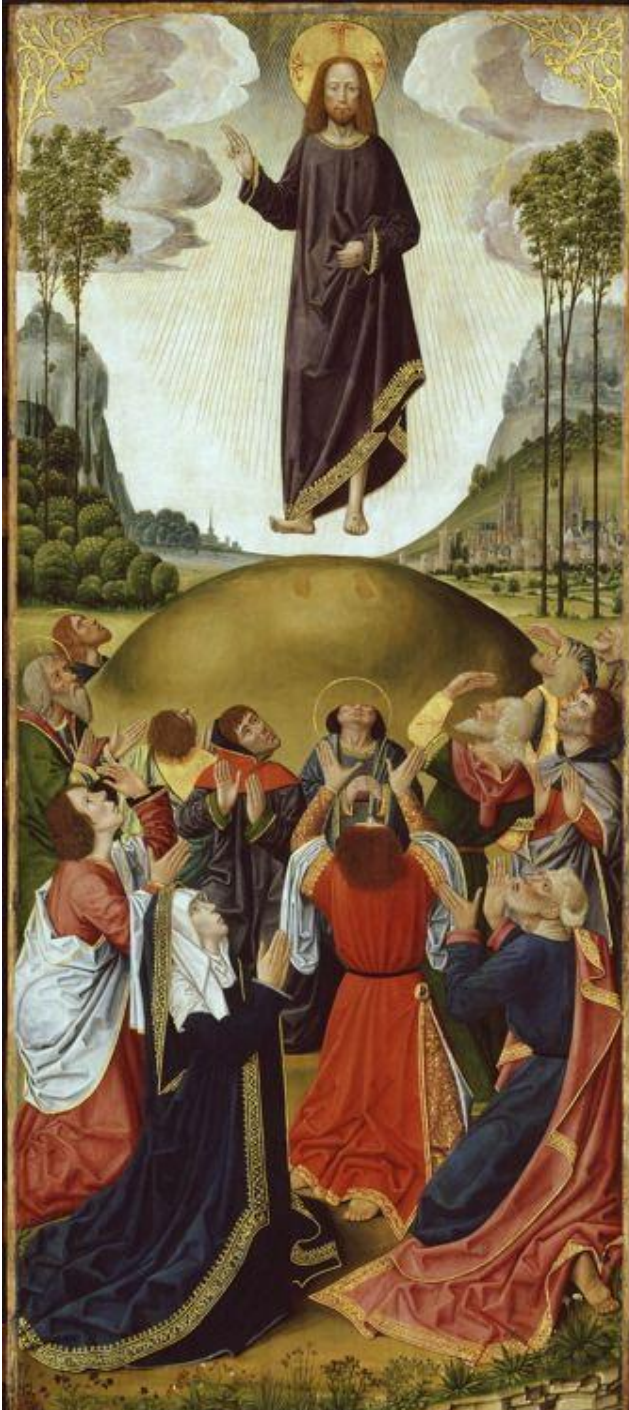
The Journey to Emmaus.

The Ascension

'All authority in heaven & on earth has been given to me. Go therefore & make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father & of the Son & of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; & lo, I am with you always to the close of the age.' (Mt 28:18-20).

'You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; & you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem & in all Judea & Samaria & to the end of the earth' (Acts 1:8).

- The Apostles are witnesses, foundation stones for the Church.
- Jesus ascends to heaven where he is enthroned. The Kingdom. The time of the Church.
- Entrusts ministers to handle earthly affairs of His kingdom.
- Missionary mandate: to the Church to carry on the mission of salvation. Continue Christ's work, teaching & administering the sacraments. Christ passes on the power to baptise, opening the way to personal salvation.
- The mission will endure to the end of time.
- Christ promises to remain with the Church. The Church, helped by the presence of its founder can be confident of never failing to fulfil its mission down the centuries until the end of time.
- After the Ascension, Apostles wait & pray for guidance.



The Ascension, atarpiece Thuisson-les-Abbeville, c. 1490.



Pentecost

- Pentecost takes place 50 days after the Passover
- Apostles, Our Lady & some disciples praying in upper room (where Last Supper celebrated).
- The Church began around AD 30, in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost.
- This is the Baptism with the Holy Spirit & with fire.

‘When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven & filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated & came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit & began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them’ (Acts 2:1-4).

What Happened at Pentecost?

- Peter stepped forward & announced the Good News that Jesus, who had been sent by God & crucified, had risen. He was the Messiah, for whom their people had awaited for generations (Acts 2-4).
- Peter told those who asked that they had to repent & be baptized for the forgiveness of sins; then they would receive the Holy Spirit.

'Repent & be baptised every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, & you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit' (Acts 2:38).

- 3,000 baptized.



Pentecost: The Universal Church

Jews from all over the world were in Jerusalem to worship (Acts 2:5-8).

'Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language?"' (Acts 2:5-8)

'Parthians, Medes, & Elamites, inhabitants of Mesopotamia, Judea & Cappadocia, Pontus & Asia, Phrygia & Pamphylia, Egypt & the districts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews & converts to Judaism); Cretans & Arabs' (Acts 2:9-11).

The Church is Catholic (universal) from the very start.



The Apostles Filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:5)

The Apostolic Age: The Church

The members of the Church

'devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers'
(Acts 2:45).

The first Christians did not think they were establishing a new religion. They were Jews who followed the way indicated by the Messiah.

Saturday: went to the Synagogue

Sunday: met to celebrate the Eucharist

The Liturgy of the Word & Liturgy of the Eucharist are contained in the Mass.



St Priscilla & St Aquila with St Paul.

The Visible Church

Descent of the Holy Spirit is a significant development in the relations between God & man. The Holy Spirit gives God's life to the Church

Old Testament Covenants to bind God & man are perfectly completed in Christ who is true God & true man. From now on God & man are united by the Holy Spirit who gives life to the Church. The church is the principal way through which Christ is present in the world.

The Church:

- Not just a well-intentioned human institution trying to keep going with what Jesus started. It is not an NGO. The Church, founded by Christ, continues Christ's mission, empowered by the Holy Spirit.
- 'The sacrament of salvation': sign & instrument of communion with God.
- In the New Testament we see the Church growing as a visible institution:
 - Under Peter's leadership, teaching & interpreting the Scriptures with final & ultimate authority, guided by the Holy Spirit (Acts 15:24-29); writing inspired letters & handing on oral traditions (2 Thess 2:15)
 - Sacraments: Baptizing & celebrating the Eucharist & other sacraments (Acts 10:44-48; 2:42) Efficacious signs of God's grace. The sacraments continue the works of God in salvation history, localizing them, making them personal, ensuring that all people would be joined to the saving work of Jesus until the end of time
 - Hierarchical: creating permanent institutions (priests, bishops & deacons) to carry on the work into the future (Titus 1:5-9; 1 Tim 3:1-9; 4:14; 5:17-23).
- Christians continue the Church's mission (not just clergy or the Apostles). Sharing Church's mission is part of the Christian vocation. But not the foundation role of the apostles as eye-witnesses, with powers of binding & loosing, etc.



St Peter Healing the Sick with his Shadow, Masaccio, 1426.



Saint Peter and Saint Paul.

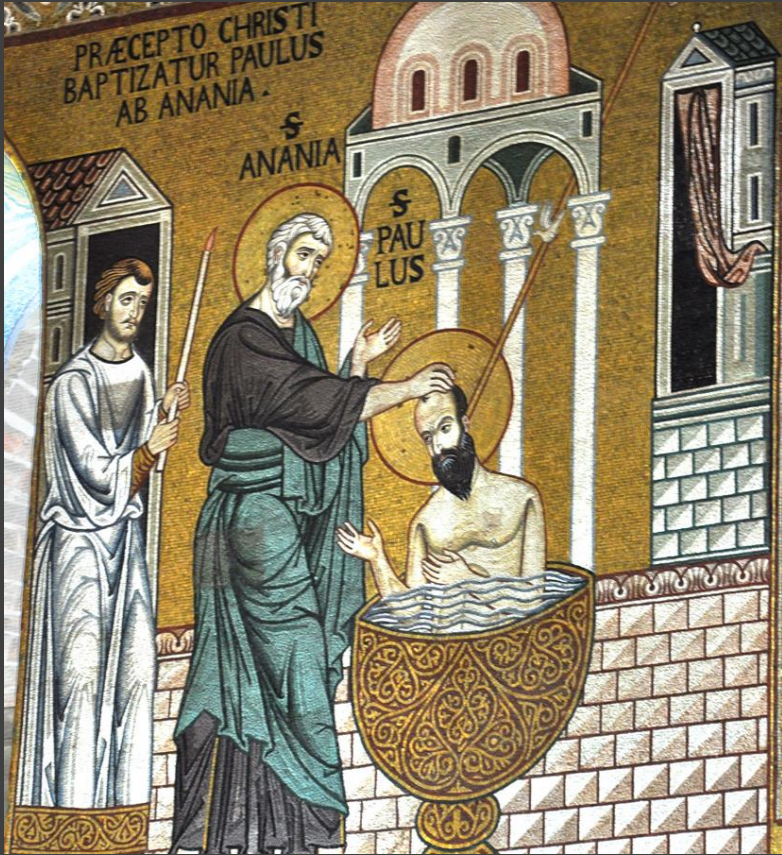
Books of the New Testament

- Gospels
 - St Matthew, Apostle
 - St Mark, mentioned in New Testament. Testimonies of Peter?
 - St Luke, Infancy narrative; writes in Greek
 - St John, Apostle. Gospel written last. Omits some things the others have covered and focuses on other things, eg Jn 6, Last Supper.
- Acts of the Apostles (St Luke)
- Letters
 - St Peter Apostle Letters 1 & 2
 - St John Apostle Letters 1-3
 - St James Apostle Letter
 - St Jude Apostle Letter
 - Letters of St Paul
- Revelation (St John Apostle)

ST PAUL

- Saul: A zealous Pharisee
- Persecuted the 1st Christians; approved of the killing of St Stephen
- Conversion on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3-6)
- Chosen by Christ as apostle to the Gentiles
 - Classical education: could speak to Greeks & Romans on their own terms
 - Grounding in Logic: useful for doctrine
 - Intense study of the Scriptures: arguments & tools to speak with the Jewish authorities
 - Roman citizenship: helped keep him safe





The Baptism of St Paul, mosaic, Palermo, 1140-1170.



Chapel of St Ananias, Damascus.

Christians at Damascus

The Call of Saint Paul

- Relationship with the other Apostles
- Apostle to the Gentiles
- The Letters of St Paul
- Apostolic Journeys of St Paul
- The Gospel preached by Paul
- Pauline communities



St Paul in Athens, Raphael, 1515.



Letters & Christian Communities

- Romans
- Hebrews
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians
- Galatians
- Corinthians 2
- Thessalonians 2
- Timothy 2
- Titus
- Philemon

URGENT

The Jerusalem Council



Acts
15:1-35

49AD



THE COUNCIL OF JERUSALEM 49AD

Is Christianity open to all people or only to Jews (those who follow the Mosaic law)?

- Mt 28:19 Mission to make disciples of all nations.
- Do they need to become Jews before Christians? Circumcision, law of Moses
- Acts 10: St Peter & the Centurion Cornelius
- Acts 15: Apostles met in Jerusalem. St Paul attended. Pharisee converts argued that gentile converts must follow the Mosaic Law, especially circumcision.
- Decision: It was not necessary to become a Jew & follow the Mosaic Law. We are saved by the grace of Christ, not by the Law.
- 1st Church council in which church leaders met to decide on important issues.



Left: *Saint Cornelius and Angel*, c. 1910, Tiffany Studios; Right: *St. Peter Baptising the Centurion Cornelius*, Trevisani, c. 1700.



The Martyrdom of St Stephen, Lotto, early 16th c.

The Jewish Persecution

- Just as Jews so eagerly accepted the Good News, so also were the Jews the first persecutors of Christians.
- Jesus was regarded as a blasphemer & the disciples as apostates.
- After St Stephen was stoned to death, Christians were actively persecuted in Jerusalem.
- Paul suffered on numerous occasions.
- St James (Greater, Zebedee) martyred in 44 – Herod Agrippa's persecution
- St James (Less) Bishop of Jerusalem martyred in 62
- First Christians spread out from Jerusalem taking the faith with them to various parts of the Roman Empire.

The Roman Empire, *circa* 300 AD



- At its material peak when Jesus was born (*Pax Romana*)
- Stability & order.
- Effective communication & transportation; extensive system of roads; safe sea lanes
- Culture, architecture, arts, language, homegrown & borrowed from others
- Greek language widespread
- Effective administration
- Protection of the Roman Army

Jerusalem

The Siege of Jerusalem & Destruction of the Temple, 70AD



The Destruction of Jerusalem.



Detail, Arch of Titus, Rome.

The Word Spreads: St Peter in Rome

- St Peter went from Jerusalem to Antioch & finally to Rome, which became the seat of the Church's governance.
- Tradition holds that Peter spent more than 20 years in Rome as bishop before his martyrdom under Nero.
- He was buried on the Vatican hill, in a pagan cemetery. Constantine built the first St. Peter's Basilica over his grave.



St Peter and St Paul, ivory belt buckle, 5th c.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6LJq7_UKqUA

http://www.vatican.va/various/basiliche/necropoli/scavi_english.html



Persecutions of Early Church: Rome

- 30-60 A.D. – Christians benefit from Roman tolerance of Judaism, although persecution by Jewish authorities is sometimes severe.
- 64 A.D. – The Emperor Nero blames Christians for the fire that devastates Rome. Persecutions begin. Sts Peter & Paul are martyred.
- The persecutions would continue, on & off, until 313AD when Christianity was decriminalised under the Emperor Constantine.

Why Were Christians So Disliked?

- Christians refused to recognize Emperor as divine
- Christians were monotheists & refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods.
- Concern centred around Roman citizens who were expected to honour the Roman gods.
- Christians were viewed as a danger to the State.
- Christians became easy scapegoats for rulers like Nero.
- Christians lived by a different morality than pagans
- Christian morality condemned pagan debauchery.

For the Romans, religion was first and foremost a social activity that promoted unity & loyalty to the state. Religious beliefs were valid only insofar as they could be shown to be in line with ancient customs; new & innovative teachings were regarded with distrust.

Justin Martyr, *Letter to Diogenes*:

- Christians “marry as men do & beget children, but they do not practice abortion. They share tables but not beds. They live in the flesh, but not according to the flesh...”
- “The world suffers nothing from Christians but hates them because they reject its pleasures.”
- Neighbors denounced Christians out of dislike, or greed for their property.
- Christians lived for heaven & not for earth



The Pantheon, Rome.



Great Fire of Rome.

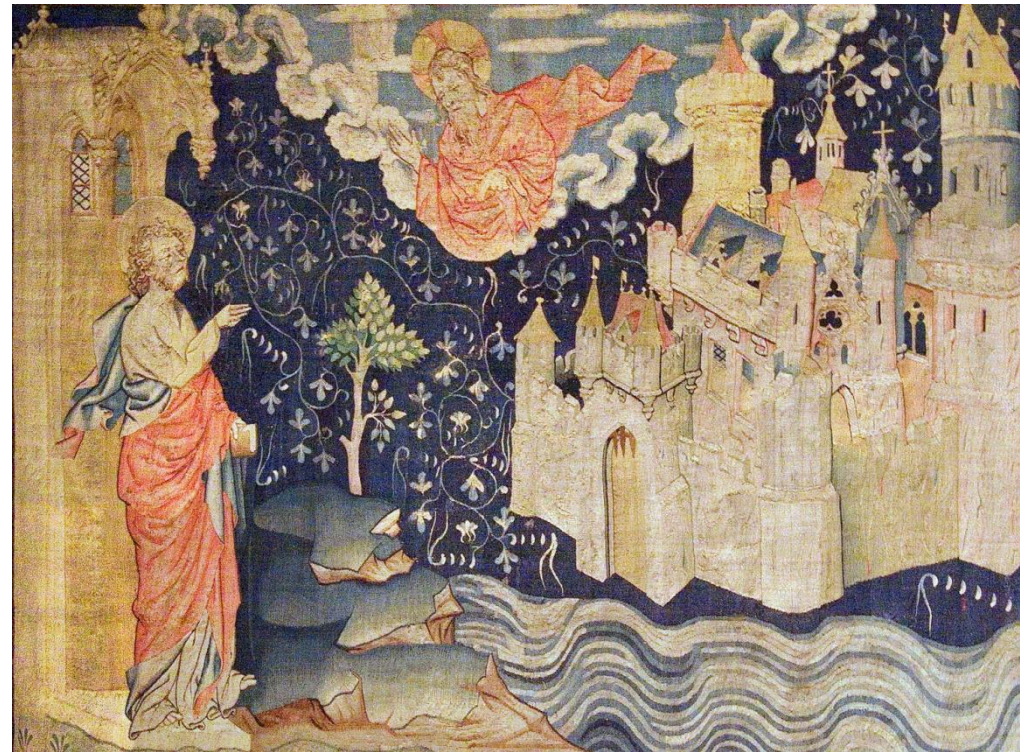


Ten General Persecutions

- Nero (64-67)
 - Peter & Paul
- Domitian (95-96)
 - Clement I (3rd successor of St Peter)
- Trajan to Hadrian (112-138)
 - Ignatius of Antioch; Polycarp
- Marcus Aurelius (161)
 - Cecilia; Justin
- Septimus Severus (202)
 - Perpetua; Felicity; Irenaeus
- Maximin of Thrace (235)
 - Popes Pontian and Antherus
- Decius (249-251)
 - Fabiran; Agatha
- Valerian (257-260)
 - Cyprian; Lawrence; Agnes of Rome
- Aurelian (275)
- Diocletian (303-311)

The End of the World

- Jesus Christ won our salvation with his Passion, Death & Resurrection. The Kingdom is established but imperfect.
 - Christ founded the Church & entrusted it with the means of sanctification. The Scriptures were fulfilled & the deposit of Revelation ended with the death of the last apostle.
- Now is the time of the Church. Awaiting. The Church instituted by Christ continues Christ's work of salvation until the end of time, inviting everyone to freely respond to the gift of redemption by receiving baptism & entering communion to which God calls us.
- The plan of salvation will be completed at the end of time.
- Jesus spoke of the end of the world.
- *Revelation* (Apocalypse): visions describing the state of the world, persecutions & end of the world
- The Bible ends with images of triumph and victory - "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev 21:1). We live in joyful hope waiting for the coming of the Lord again in glory, a coming we anticipate in every celebration of the Eucharist (**1 Cor 10:26**). Receiving Christ in the Eucharist is a foretaste of Heaven.
- 1st Christians believed end of the world would be soon.
- 70AD Siege & destruction of Jerusalem, destruction of the Temple by Romans.



The Heavenly Jerusalem, detail, tapestry of the Apocalypse from Angers, France. Octave 444 / CC BY-SA (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>)

The Church

Left: *The Baptism of the Eunuch*, Rembrandt, c. 1626; Right: *Saints Priscilla and Aquila with Saint Paul*.



- Prepared in the Old Covenant
- Instituted by Jesus Christ
- Revealed by the Holy Spirit
- The Universal Sacrament of Salvation
 - Teaching
 - Governing
 - Sacraments
 - Fidelity to the Deposit of Revelation
- Mission: catholicity
- Perfected in glory



Mother of
the Church

Mater Ecclesiae, mosaic, Rome.