

CONSTANTINE AND CHRISTIANITY: THE FORMATION OF CHURCH/ STATE RELATIONS IN THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

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Abstract

The relationship between religion and government can be intricate and dynamic and has often had important consequences for both. This is especially evident in the change that took place in both the Christian Church and the Roman Empire during the reign of the Emperor Constantine (A.D. 312-337). This paper discusses the effects of the events and legislation of that period on both church and state. It will attempt to explain how as a result of Constantine's policies, the Christian Church and the Roman State each gained control of, and influence over the other. This in turn resulted in a mutual dependency which allowed and maintained control of the people. The essay begins with an introduction to the subject and a description of the circumstances of Constantine's rise to power. This is followed by a discussion of Constantine's Christian conversion, the motives behind it, and the implications of those motives. Next, an account of Constantine's most important pro-Christian legislation is presented, with an analysis of its effects on church and empire. The focus shifts to his policy development in regard to involvement in church affairs, concentrating on the two major church councils of Arles and Nicaea. Finally the long term results of Constantine's policies are discussed. The gain, loss and exchange of power are analyzed from both church and government perspectives-simple timeline to aid the reader in understanding the progression of the church-state relationship.

Keywords: Constantine's conversion, Church/State relations, Government Policy, Church Councils, The Edict of Milan.

Introduction

Government and religion have always been important forces in the lives and thoughts of the common people. The relationship between the two institutions has the potential to profoundly change both religion and state, and to transform society. In the first three centuries after Jesus Christ, the Christian religion was developing the influence necessary to effect a change in the Roman Empire. At the end of the fourth century

A.D., that change had occurred, the formerly pagan Empire had united with the Christian Church, combining the power of both institutions to form the ecclesiastical state. What was responsible for this change? While certain historians posit that it would have been an inevitable result of the growth of Christianity,¹ the immediate cause of the union of church and state can be traced to the reign of Emperor Constantine (A.D. 312-337). As a result of Constantine's policies, the Christian Church and the Roman State gained control of the other and simultaneously became dependent on one another to maintain control of the people. The paper focuses on the circumstances that led to Constantine's rise to power and the Church/State relations in the Roman empire during his reign.

Constantine's Rise to Power

In order to understand the immense changes that came about during the reign of Constantine, it is necessary to be familiar with the state of the Empire before his ascension to power. By A.D. 300 the Roman Empire was gradually declining. Wars in the east and trouble with the barbarians in the north were putting a strain on the Empire from the outside while a division of rule² weakened it from within.³ The social classes became more distinct and moral standards were in decline.⁴ In the religious arena, paganism was an integral part of life and government. It was a form of patriotism and national celebration accepted as a matter of course by most in the Empire.⁵ It was being challenged by a Christian minority that had been increasing in strength and number for more than two centuries.

The emerging Christian Church had grown considerably since its foundation, even in the face of severe persecution.⁶ Disliked by their pagan neighbours and mistrusted by the government, the followers of Jesus Christ encountered opposition at every turn. Under the emperor Diocletian (A.D. 284-305), the Christians suffered the most serious and prolonged persecution that they had yet faced.⁷ Persecution, however, did not seem to hinder Christian expansion, which was apparent in the new role religion was playing in politics. Christianity was a factor that the Roman rulers could no longer ignore.

In the Roman mind, religion was a government department, and it was the duty of the government to maintain favour in the eyes of the gods.⁸ From the Christian point of view, there was a distinct difference between God and emperor, and the former had priority. Pagans saw Christians as a dangerous threat to the crown. Christians simply wanted

relief from persecution. Clearly the two could not co-exist without some change in the existing order. When Diocletian⁹abdicated in A.D. 305, “none of the contestants [for emperor] could avoid the religious issue, and each had his own policy.”¹⁰

With Diocletian out of the way, several candidates for emperor appeared on the scene. One was Constantine. Upon the death of his father, Constantius,¹¹Constantine was named Augustusin his place.¹²Following the elimination of the other three members of the ruling Tetrarchy,¹³Constantine had only to conquer Maxentius, the son of Maximin, to gain complete control of the western portion of the empire. In A.D. 312, in the battle at the Milvian Bridge, Constantine defeated Maxentius and rode into Rome as the victorious Augustus of the West.¹⁴

Constantine’s Conversion

This episode at the Milvian Bridge marked perhaps the most important turning point in the history of the Empire. It was here that Constantine became a supporter of Christianity. There is much discussion of the circumstances surrounding Constantine’s “conversion.” There is no doubt that he was, in some way, converted to the cause; the debate revolves around his motivation.¹⁵Historian Alexander Flick puts it this way:

Whatever the theories may be, the fact remains that for some reasons Constantine invoked the aid of the Christians’ God, and carried the Christian emblem in front of his troops to one victory after another until he became the sole ruler of the Empire. If it was merely experimenting with the name and cross of Jesus, the experiment brought convincing belief, for the sacred emblem was employed in all later military campaigns.¹⁶

From that time on, Constantine was recognized as a Christian by pagans and Christians alike.¹⁷ Whilst some are of the opinion that Constantine’s conversion was genuine, others think that his policies to support Christians were for political expediency. As a converted Christian, why did he sacrifice to the unconquered sun- Sol Invictus after his victory at the Milvian Bridge? Why was he not a catechumen but got baptized on his death bed?

Constantine’s motivations are of major concern, since they would guide his policies toward the church in years to come. He had some

Christian background, and the influences of his mother and his traveling companion, Hosius, Bishop of Cordoba, made him fairly sympathetic to Christianity on a theological basis.¹⁸ In addition, on a political level, he had continued his father's policies of religious toleration in the northwestern portion of the Empire. Thus, it was not completely out of character for Constantine to embrace the Christian religion. However, there were some obvious political benefits from his conversion. As a politician, he understood the increasing importance of the Christian minority. "Apparently every ruler of consequence had recognized that persecution had failed and that anyone who hoped to control the Empire or even an important part of it must make his peace with the Church."¹⁹ It was certainly to Constantine's political advantage to gain the support of the church.

Perhaps the more compelling reason for Constantine's "conversion," however, lies in his superstition. Maxentius, his adversary, relied heavily on pagan magic. Constantine's adherence to the Christian God was quite possibly an effort to combat that.²⁰ He would pragmatically give his allegiance to the god who served him best. In his early years of Christianity, Constantine seems to have looked upon the new religion as a type of formula for success.²¹ Piety led to victory. If he served God, God would serve him. The arrangement worked well, and as he marched to victory after victory under the sign of the cross, his devotion to the Christian faith increased. To him, Christianity was a more efficient means, and certainly a successful one, of accomplishing that which was expected of paganism.

Although, his grasp of Christianity was, especially in the beginning, regrettably shallow, Constantine seems to have been sincere in his beliefs. Certainly he was guided by political necessity, as well as, religious fervor. His first obligation was to the Empire. As time went on, he portrayed himself as God's appointed sovereign, rewarded with divine favour. "It thus appeared that Constantine gained, rather than lost, his willingness to exchange the style and title of a god for that of God's vice-regent."²² Constantine's pragmatic view of Christianity and Christian theology was an important factor in his policy-making, and in the relationship of church and state that resulted from it.

Development of Government Policy

Constantine's "conversion" experience soon became evident in his government policy. Early in A.D. 313 he met in Milan with Licinius, Augustus in the East, where the two developed a policy of religious toleration. The Edict of Milan,²³ the "Magna Charta of religious liberty,"²⁴ had a profound impact on the Empire. It ended the persecution of the Christians and "put Christianity on equality with paganism."²⁵ Christianity was now considered a *religiocita*, a licensed cult.²⁶ This meant that Christians had a right to profess their faith without fear of legal obstacles. In addition, those who had been deprived of their status and legal power regained their position. They were given freedom of assembly, and property which had been confiscated during periods of persecution was returned to its original owner.²⁷ The edict recognized the church as a corporation by authorizing it to hold property.²⁸ With astounding rapidity the position of the Christians had been reversed. At last they were legally equal to other religions.

It is not surprising that the Edict of Milan was enthusiastically welcomed by the church. Emerging from an era of torture and martyrdom,²⁹ they hailed Constantine as the champion of their cause. Alexander Flick describes the results of the Edict like this:

It did not make Christianity the state religion, as is generally asserted, but only legalized it, and popularized it. Now people could and did openly desert the old and join the new faith...[The Edict] gave it opportunity for public organization, thus paving the way for the Catholic hierarchy already begun; and marks a new era in the history of the Christian church, because at last a great Roman Emperor and his conquering army had taken up the sword in defense of persecuted Christianity.³⁰

The church was not the only party that benefited from the Edict of Milan. Constantine gained substantive advantages from his new policy. By ending the persecutions, he gained the support of his Christian subjects. By allowing the church to legally organize, he strengthened and institutionalized this support. A powerful, unified church, so long as it was loyal to him, could be a tremendous political advantage. However, the church also had the potential to exert a significant amount of power over his policies. In 313, Constantine's motives were probably ambiguous, and focused on immediate concerns.³¹ It is doubtful that he gave sufficient

thought to the implications of the precedent that he was establishing. Nevertheless, “whatever was done at Milan in 313 still remains the most significant of the many milestones in the road by which the church and the state moved toward co-operation.”³²Constantine had begun to rely on the church for support, and it was dependent on him for protection. Already the Church and the Empire were joining forces.

The Edict of Milan was followed by other decrees which also favoured the Christians. The clergy were exempted from municipal and military duties (a privilege already granted to pagan priests and Jewish rabbis), and Christian slaves were emancipated. In A.D. 316 various customs and ordinances which were offensive to Christians were abolished, and by 323 the pagan symbols of Jupiter, Apollo, Mars, and Hercules had disappeared from imperial coins.³³

It is interesting to note that most of Constantine’s decrees before A.D. 323 seemed to be aimed at maintaining equality and toleration for Christianity. It was not until he defeated Licinius and became sole emperor in 324 that he began to actively promote the religion.³⁴

Licinius was by no means a supporter of Christianity. He apparently agreed to Constantine’s policies out of political necessity rather than sympathy for the faith. When the two rulers clashed, each determined to gain full control of the Empire, Licinius made a belated attempt to rid his Eastern domain of Christian influence. Ironically his policies backfired, and he only succeeded in alienating a large segment of the population, which then backed Constantine in the battle for the Empire.³⁵Constantine manipulated growing ecclesiastical favour to increase his power and undermine Licinius’ equal status.³⁶With enthusiasm and what appears to be genuine sincerity, he played out the role of the Christian warrior. The struggle for power culminated in A.D. 324 when his victory in the battle of Chrysopolis “made Constantine sole ruler of the Roman world, and sealed the fate of the immortal gods under whose banner Licinius had belatedly fought.”³⁷In defeating Licinius, Constantine believed that he was waging war for the sake of Christianity,³⁸and in A.D. 324 he demonstrated this proselytizing outlook by issuing a “general exhortation to all Romans to embrace the new creed for the common weal.”³⁹All indications are that Constantine had progressed in his understanding and appreciation for the Christian faith.⁴⁰He now gave complete allegiance to the Christian God, spoke of himself as a servant of God,⁴¹and set about to “legislate the millennium in a generation.”⁴²

Formation of Policy through Church Councils

In his role as protector of the church, Constantine felt that he was also responsible for solving its internal problems. His involvement in deciding church doctrine and practice is most readily seen in the events at the Council of Arles (A.D. 314) and the Council of Nicaea (A.D. 325). In both of these church councils Constantine had considerable influence on the development and enforcement of church doctrine.

In A.D. 313 the unity of the Christians was threatened by the Donatist faction, a fanatical and militant minority that disagreed with the generally accepted doctrines surrounding the sacraments.⁴³ When the matter could not be solved internally, Constantine got involved:

The failure of an African synod to reach a settlement led to an appeal to the emperor, as a consequence of which the issue was brought to trial before ecclesiastical boards successively convoked at Rome and Arles and finally, before Constantine himself at Rome. Whereupon the emperor, no doubt as the self-appointed 'overseer of those outside,' undertook to implement the verdict of the courts.⁴⁴

The verdict favored the Catholic⁴⁵ majority, which became more powerful as a result of the Emperor's backing.

As a consequence of the events surrounding Arles, the church gained power and lost freedom. In bringing their case before the emperor, the Christian leaders were introduced into the political sphere. "Henceforth bishops became men of power and influence in political as well as religious life."⁴⁶ In his efforts to reconcile conflicting teachings within the church Constantine gave church leaders more power and elevated them in society by giving weight to their opinions.⁴⁷ This increased influence, however, came with a price. It is interesting to note that at this point of Constantine's reign the church appealed to him; he did not actively seek to control its doctrine. This act of appeal set the precedent for government involvement in church doctrine. Henceforth Constantine would take an active role in settling church disputes. An important example of this is seen in the Council of Nicaea in 325 AD.

During the time that Constantine became sole Roman Emperor, the church was confronted with the Arian heresy. Briefly stated, Arianism taught that Christ, God the Son, was subordinate to God the Father. Neither fully human nor fully divine, he was created rather than the

Creator, and was subject to change.⁴⁸ This had serious implications for orthodox Christian theology, and the idea was violently opposed by most of the bishops. Although Constantine had not the vaguest idea of the importance of the dispute,⁴⁹ or even the issues involved, he was disturbed by the division it caused. The Arian controversy became the primary issue in Christian circles, and polarized the church.⁵⁰

In a short time the whole Eastern Church became a 'metaphysical battle-field.' Finally both sides appealed to Constantine, who, viewing the contest as a war of words, wrote a common letter and sent it by his court-bishop to both leaders in which he said that the quarrel was childish and unworthy of such churchmen; that moreover it dis-pleased him personally, hence they were asked to stop it. When the imperial request failed, Constantine summoned the Council of Nicaea to settle the dispute.⁵¹

On June 9, 325, the Council of Nicaea convened, and was commissioned with the purpose of settling disputes which posed a danger to the Empire.⁵² More than 2,000 church leaders (including over 300 bishops) attended this first universal council of Christendom; the whole Empire was represented.⁵³ Conspicuous among those present was the Emperor himself.

The political significance of this council lies in Constantine's participation in, and influence over, it. In an effort to unite the bishops, "Constantine himself attended the sessions—some two months of them—and bore the chief burden of controlling them."⁵⁴ This demonstrates the magnitude of government control over the church, and the rapidity with which it came about. The church, in receiving approval and support from the state, was fast relinquishing its rights to self-government. At the same time, however, church teachings were being integrated into the state government. When the orthodox bishops triumphed and wrote the Nicene Creed,⁵⁵ "the fundamental law and charter of Trinitarian Christianity,"⁵⁶ Constantine required all the bishops to subscribe to it.⁵⁷ He then denounced the dissenters (Chiefly Arius and his followers, who had perpetuated the controversy) and decreed that all their works be destroyed. The penalty for owning a work written by Arius and refusing to burn it was death.⁵⁸ Most importantly, the Nicene Creed was universally proclaimed as imperial law.⁵⁹ Thus, through Constantine's involvement, Christian doctrine was

legislated throughout the Empire. As the state increased its control of the church, the church was gaining influence over the state. The tradition which had been established in the resolution of the Donatist schism was now firmly entrenched:

Interference in the most vital concerns of the Church was recognized as an imperial prerogative. The Emperor called the Council, presided over its proceedings, acted as mediator between contending factions, forced the Nicene Creed on the Church, fixed the day for celebrating Easter, and approved the first ecclesiastical canons.⁶⁰

Church and State, united in the person of Constantine, had become almost inseparable.

Long-Term Effects of Constantine's Policies

The effects of this unexpected marriage of church and state shook the Empire, and had profound and irreversible effects on both institutions. One important result, and the basis for most others, was the gradual conversion of the Empire. This increased the power of the Christian church as well as that of the Christian state, and joined them even more closely together. As Constantine legislated Christian principles, a large segment of the population gradually drifted into the Christian camp:

For vast numbers who were content not to think but simply to follow the leadership of the emperor, it was merely a matter of substituting Christ for Jupiter, the Eucharist for the sacrifice, baptism for the *taurobolium*, and pretending to themselves that otherwise everything was the same.⁶¹

For the masses, obeying the law soon translated into accepting the basic tenets of Christianity. Civil law promoted Christian values. Change in criminal law blurred the distinction between the theological notions of sin and legal consequences of crime.⁶² They may not have understood Christianity or sincerely believed it, but they were subject to it nonetheless through civil laws. Constantine himself heavily promoted Christianity, especially in his later years:

He tried to convert his subjects to Christianity through Christian governors in the provinces, by letters and

sermons, by rewarding towns for converting temples into churches, and by conforming to Christian worship.⁶³

The state no longer had sole control of the hearts and minds of its subjects as it had in the era of pagan state-worship. The church was gradually gaining the moral allegiance of the people. Henceforth the Empire would have to work through the church to maintain their loyalty. In creating a Christian State and fusing politics with religion, Constantine in a sense put himself at the mercy of the church. He was dependent on its support for the support of the people. Rather than gaining full control over it himself, he put it in a position to control him.

The church gained the illusion of even more control as necessity eventually filled the government with those who were, if not sincere Christians, at least willing to promote Christianity for their own well-being. For example:

An edict forbidding the discharge of pagan sacrificial rites by imperial officials had the effect of packing the administrative services, from the great praetorian prefectures down to the government of the meanest province, with nominal Christians.⁶⁴

It must be taken into account, however, that this nominal adherence to the Christian faith, while strengthening the political influence of the church, weakened its spiritual power and integrity. "Before the reign was over, pagans and Christians alike could discern, with pretended or genuine distress, the contamination of the Church by persons converted only on the surface, or for the wrong reasons."⁶⁵ Equating Roman law with God's law, accommodating citizens could easily allow the state to shape their theology. Although the Christians gained numerous converts, they gained relatively little serious commitment. Thus, in legislating Christianity, Constantine also diluted it with confused and insincere converts, regaining some of his control over it. If the people followed the doctrine as defined by the state, the effect of church control over their hearts and minds was largely neutralized.

There were, still, many sincere and well-educated Christians, bishops and other church leaders, who had a great deal of direct influence on Constantine and his policies. "Clergy were being recognized as civic as well as religious leaders and accorded a corresponding status."⁶⁶

Ecclesiastical councils functioned as “parliaments embodying the philosophic, if not political, wisdom of the empire.”⁶⁷The Christian intellectuals did much to mobilize enlightened opinion in support of Christian principles.⁶⁸Several important bishops, among them Hosius, Lactantius and Eusebius, were Constantine’s trusted political advisors.⁶⁹In this coveted position they worked hard to promote their religion. Constantine relied on the support of these advisors, and their position was dependent on his favour. The church hierarchy and the government hierarchy, parallel institutions, found themselves inevitably fused together. Each would be rendered weak and ineffective without the other.

In exchange for the numerous privileges he granted to the church, Constantine enjoyed its enthusiastic approval. His biographer, the influential Eusebius of Caesarea, praised the Emperor to an excess, lauding him as the hand of God in human history.⁷⁰“Contemporary Christian thinking seemed to provide a fresh vindication of imperial authority,”⁷¹and most church leaders were more than willing to acknowledge his divine right to rule.⁷²Constantine had become a sort of “political saint whom it was not considered impious to designate as ‘equal to the Apostles.’”⁷³

This image contributed to the ease with which he influenced the church, and reinforced the security of his authoritative position among the Christian leaders. Their confidence in him made them willing to accept his judgment:

The church recognized its subjection to the Emperor without a complaint and permitted him to appoint and dispose its officers, to call and dismiss synods and councils, like Arles (314) and Nicaea (325), and almost to replace the Holy Ghost itself in determining the proceedings.⁷⁴

Constantine had become part of the church, and both emperor and bishops were willing to work together.

There were, however, subtle dangers in this position. The exchange of favor between emperor and church provided a means for unscrupulous people to take advantage of both. Often the church was used as a vehicle to gain the benevolence of the emperor.⁷⁵In this regard, Constantine had introduced the government, as well as the church, to a new source of corruption and manipulation. Since the institutions were inextricably linked, neither could escape this contamination; rather they made each

other more vulnerable to attack. This vulnerability, in its turn, increased their reliance on one another. As the church-state relationship progressed, the church would rely on the government to validate its doctrines, and the government would rely on the pulpit to preach its politics.

Concluding Analysis

Constantine's age possesses all the ambiguities of a period of violent transition. Those ambiguities were dramatically epitomized in the person of the emperor himself. He is perhaps unique as the one human being to have enjoyed the distinction of being deified as a pagan god, while at the same time being venerated as a Christian saint.⁷⁶

In his lifetime Constantine was gradually transformed from protector of Christianity to its proselyte, and soon felt it necessary to promote his new religion. As Roman Emperor, it was his traditional duty to secure the favor of the gods.⁷⁷ He felt that he owed his allegiance to the Christian God, and thus he legislated Christianity with the intent of converting the empire and protecting the church.⁷⁸

It is difficult to believe that Constantine was insincere in his Christianity. His methods would probably have been very different if he had simply used Christianity as a political weapon. It is much more fitting to accuse him of being short-sighted. Putting Christianity on an equal footing with paganism, as he did in the Edict of Milan, was a pragmatic policy to maintain peace in the empire. It was also probably sufficient to gain influential support of the church. At first he kept the two religions fairly balanced, but toward the latter part of his reign he openly favored Christianity and showed a tendency to actively suppress paganism.⁷⁹ This gradual shift in policy had staggering implications as it paved the way for the official state church.⁸⁰

Under Constantine, paganism was still legal; "nevertheless the triumphs of Christianity were all won at the expense of paganism."⁸¹ By promoting Christianity, Constantine allowed the church to become a partner with him in controlling the empire. Although this gave him more authority over the church, in the long run it diminished imperial power. His successors had to contend with a politicized church that demanded a large degree of control over the government.

As the church became more integrated into the government, the emperors found it necessary to assume more authority over it. Following Constantine, imperial control of church-related issues became even more all-encompassing. Imperial sanction was required for all important acts

connected with the church. Councils were called and dismissed in the name of the sovereign, and were not valid without imperial approval.⁸² Clearly the church was paying a price for its new-found status. Still, the rewards of this status were outstanding:

That the union [of church and state] did paganize and materialize the Church no one can deny, but in compensation the Empire was Christianized and spiritualised. The result was mediaeval Christianity and the ecclesiastical Empire...After the time of Constantine, the Church [became] such a vital and integral part of the life of Europe that history for a thousand years must be viewed through the eyes of the Church and estimated by her standards.⁸³

In joining together, both church and state sacrificed a great deal. The church sacrificed its freedom and the state sacrificed its power. Constantine's policies "marked a revolution in the relation of the Church to the Empire, for each made a conquest of the other."⁸⁴

The government ruled through the church; the church ruled through the government. Neither could rule without the support and cooperation of the other. Under Constantine and because of his actions, the development of this Christian state church ushered in a new age, and its ideas were passed down to the successors of the Empire. The Roman Empire has long since disappeared, but in governments throughout Europe and the world, Constantine's legacy lives on.

Notes and References

1. Alexander C. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church* (New York: Burt Franklin, 1909), 293
2. Under Diocletian (A.D. 284-305) authority was divided between two rulers holding the title of Augustus, each with an associate, who was referred to as Caesar
3. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 112
4. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 112
5. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 112
6. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 112
7. Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The First Five Centuries: A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1936), 155
8. A.H.M. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1978), 202
9. Diocletian became emperor in A.D. 284. Later the first Tetrarchy was established, and he shared power with Maximian (Augustus), Constantius and Galerius (Caesars).
10. Kenneth Scott Latourette, *The First Five Centuries: A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, 155
11. Upon the abdication of Diocletian and Maximian, Constantius and Galerius were elevated to Augusti. With Maximian and Severus as Caesars, they constituted the second Tetrarchy.
12. This title was bestowed on Constantine by his father's army, and was not welcomed by the other men in pursuit of power.
13. The second Tetrarchy. Most of the contenders for power, through war and political intrigues, gradually succeeded in eliminating each other. For an in-depth discussion of this, see Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Vol. 1 (New York: Random House, no date), 341-370
14. Licinius was named Augustus in the East in A.D., 307.
15. A.H.M. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*, 73
16. Alexander C. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 117
17. Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*, 83
18. W.H.C. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 482
19. Latourette, *The First Five Centuries: A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, 160

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20. Latourette, *The First Five Centuries: A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, 158
 21. Charles Norris Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1957), 184
 22. Charles Norris Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 186
 23. There is controversy surrounding the actual occurrences at Milan. Some say that the Edict didn't exist as such, although the policies that it represented certainly changed the existing order. For a more in-depth discussion see Latourette, 158-160
 24. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 119
 25. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 119
 26. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 178
 27. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 178
 28. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 178
 29. The persecution had been especially severe in the East. The Western provinces had been granted some relief in A.D. 311 when Galerius issued his Edict of Toleration.
 30. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 119
 31. Charles Norris Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 180
 32. Latourette, *The First Five Centuries: A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, 159
 33. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 119
 34. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 124
 35. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, 484
 36. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 207
 37. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, 484
 38. Alexander C. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 119
 39. Alexander C. Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 119
 40. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, 484
 41. Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, 486
 42. Cochrane, 211. The millennium is mentioned in the book of Revelation as a thousand-year period during which Christ will reign on earth and holiness will prevail. It can also refer more generally to a perfect government.
 43. The Donatists, a Christian sect, believed that the validity of the sacraments derived from the righteousness of the administer. They challenged the reinstatement of priests who had been branded traitors

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- during the persecutions, and the validity of sacraments administered by such people. Cochrane, 206
- 44 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 206
- 45 Here the term Catholic refers to the universal Christian church
- 46 Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, 505
- 47 Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, 505
- 48 For a more detailed discussion of Arianism and its implications, see Cochrane, 233-235.
- 49 Ramsay MacMullen, *Constantine*, (New York: The Dial Press, 1969) 168
- 50 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 139
- 51 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 139
- 52 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 140
- 53 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 140
- 54 MacMullen, *Constantine*, 172
- 55 This carefully-worded statement of faith summarized the orthodox position on the Trinity, and thoroughly condemned all Arian ideas
- 56 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 210
- 57 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 142
- 58 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 210
- 59 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 142
- 60 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 143
- 61 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 248
- 62 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 203
- 63 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 122
- 64 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 208
- 65 MacMullen, *Constantine*, 161
- 66 Frend, *The Rise of Christianity*, 488
- 67 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 190
- 68 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 190
- 69 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 118
- 70 Cochrane, p. 183. Also see Eusebius' own Ecclesiastical History which contains numerous flowery and highly complementary references to the Emperor.
- 71 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 189
- 72 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 185
- 73 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 208
- 74 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 292

- 75 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 208
76 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 212
77 Jones, *Constantine and the Conversion of Europe*, 203
78 Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, 197
79 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 124
80 Christianity became the sole religion of the Roman Empire in A.D. 378, under the emperor Theodosius
81 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 120
82 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 294
83 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 293
84 Flick, *The Rise of the Mediaeval Church*, 293

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