

CHURCH HISTORY LITERACY

Early Church Growth

Lesson 16

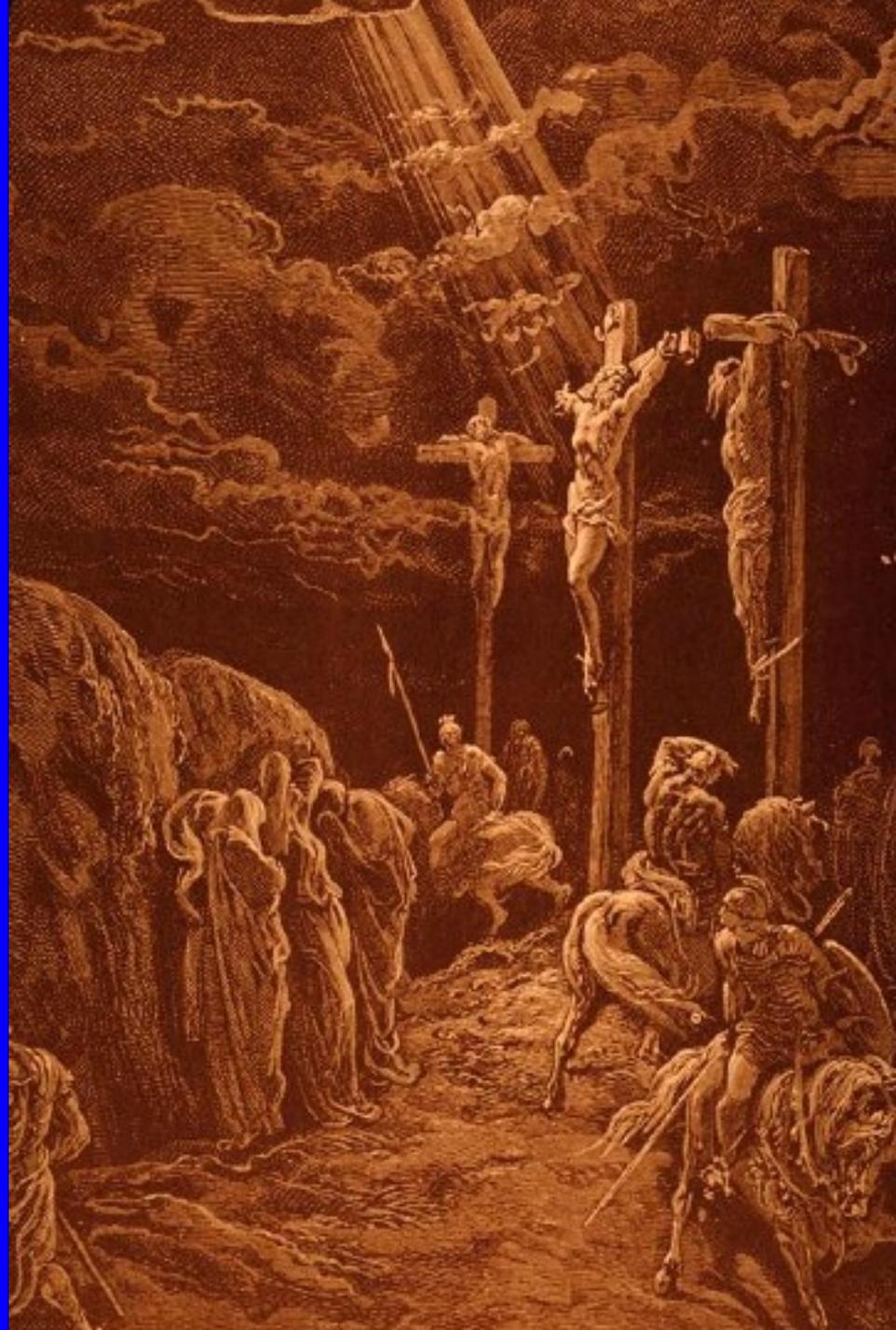
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Coming Attraction:

Two weeks of
sharing Jesus
without fear

At Calvary: a rag-
tag band of
uneducated,
unimportant
fishermen in a
backwater country



150 years later: A powerful movement and church that spanned the Roman Empire



How did the
church grow?



How did the
church grow?



How did the
church grow?



Jesus'
teaching in
John 14-16



“The Spirit of truth ... He will testify about me.” (John 15:26)



The Spirit will
“convict the
world of guilt in
regard to sin,
righteousness,
and judgment.”

(John 16:8)



How did the
church grow?



“The Spirit of truth ... He will testify about me.” (John 15:26)

“And you also must testify.”
(John 15:26)

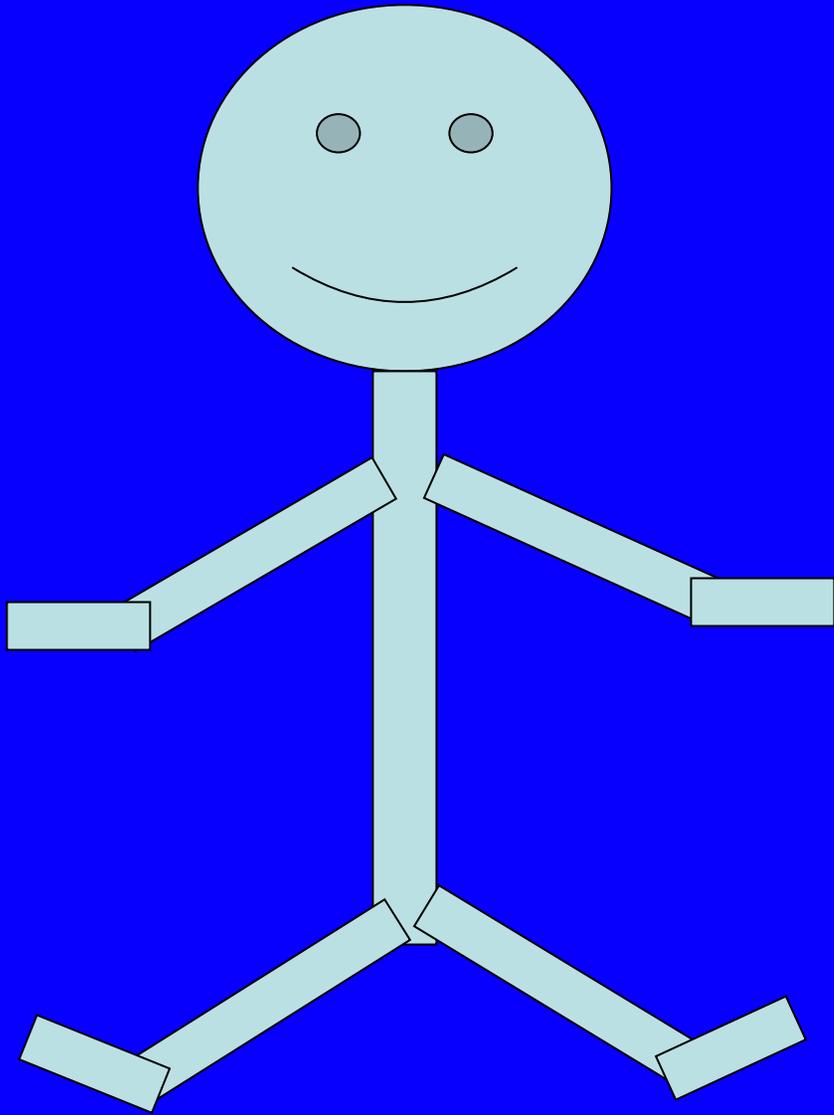


Evangelism is
the work of the
Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit
does this work
through
Christians



“Go and make disciples of all
nations” (Mt. 28:19)



The “body
of Christ”

Each with a gift
of the Holy Spirit
for the “common
good” (1 Cor. 12:7)

Why would
someone in that
era become a
Christian?



Popularity?

Why would
someone in that
era become a
Christian?



A great PR
campaign?

Why would
someone in that
era become a
Christian?

Great looking
buildings?

Why would
someone in that
era become a
Christian?



Great looking
buildings?

Why would
someone in that
era become a
Christian?

Only Jesus
answers the
deepest needs

Truth

Purpose

Peace

Hope

Why would
someone in that
era **know that?**

Only Jesus
answers the
deepest needs

Truth

Purpose

Peace

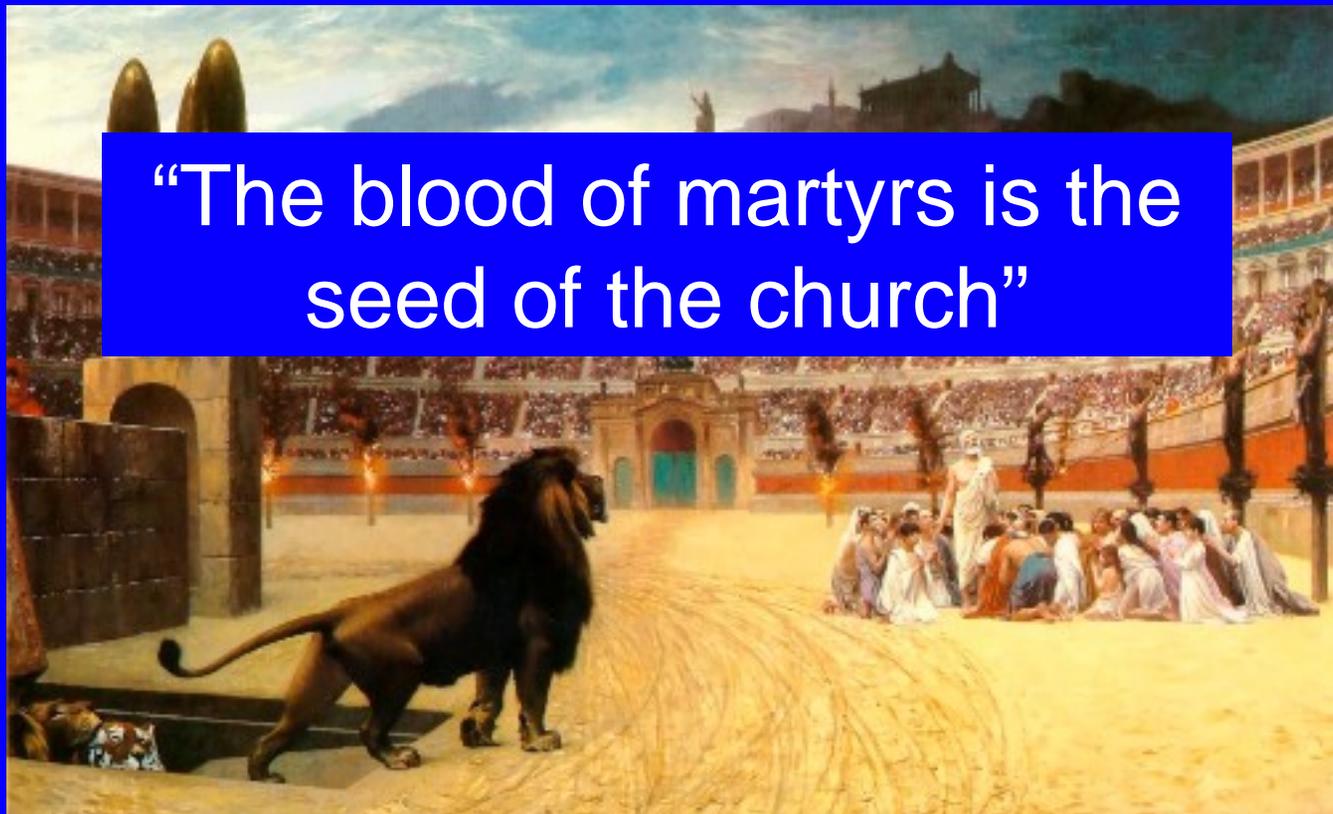
Hope

5 features of early Christians

1. Passion
2. Prayer
3. Partnership
4. Power
5. Preparation

Passion

An absolute conviction that Jesus had conquered the grave



“The blood of martyrs is the seed of the church”

Prayer

Consider the
Didache: Teaching
recitation of the
Lord's prayer 3
times daily



The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name. Thy
kingdom come; thy will be
done in heaven as it is on earth.

Give us this day, our daily
bread and forgive us our debts
(trespasses); as we forgive our
debtors (those who trespass
against us). And lead us not
into temptation, but deliver us
from evil. For thine is the
kingdom and the power and the
glory forever, amen.

Our heavenly Father. You are holy
in your person and your actions.
We pray that your church will grow
on earth and that it will finally be
united with you in heaven. Please
make sure we have the things we
need today, including not just food,
but forgiveness for our sins.
Knowing your forgiveness, we also
forgive those who have wronged
us. Father, please protect us
spiritually. We live for you. You
are all powerful. You alone are
worthy of our praise. Amen

Partnership

We are part of God's team; it is His work



Celsus the Critic: Comments
of church's "social bonding"

Partnership

We are part of God's team; it is His work



Tertullian the Lawyer: “See how these Christians love each other”

Partnership

We are part of God's team; it is His work



Jesus: "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (Jn. 13:35)

Partnership

We are part of God's team; it is His work



Henry Chadwick: “The practical application of charity [love] was probably the single most potent cause of Christian success”

Partnership

We are part of God's team; it is His work



Care for
poor

Care for
widows

Care for
orphans

Partnership

We are part of God's team; it is His work

251:

Church staff (1 Bishop, 46 Presbyters, 7 deacons, subdeacons, 42 acolytes, 52 exorcists, readers, doorkeepers)

Also: 1,500 widows and needy persons, all of whom were "fed by the grace and kindness of the Lord."

Power

REAL GREAT
POWER!!!!



Power

REAL GREAT
POWER!!!!



Power

REAL GREAT POWER!!!!



Preparation

“Always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence.” (1 Pet. 3:15)

Points for Home

Let's be people of:

1. Passion

Points for Home

Let's be people of:

1. Passion
2. Prayer

Points for Home

Let's be people of:

1. Passion
2. Prayer
3. Partnership

Points for Home

Let's be people of:

1. Passion
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4. Power

Points for Home

Let's be people of:

1. Passion
2. Prayer
3. Partnership
4. Power
5. Preparation