The background is a composite image. On the left, the lower portion of the Colosseum is visible, showing its iconic tiered arches. On the right, a large, detailed marble bust of a man with curly hair is shown in profile. The upper half of the image features a map of the Roman Empire, with various regions labeled in Latin: DACIA, MYSIA, MARE, TRACIA, MARE, and ISADICANA. The title text is overlaid on this map section.

# ROME & THE BIRTH OF CHRISTIANITY



# Part 11: Introduction

After Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection from the dead, He spent 40 days with His eleven Apostles prior to His ascension from the Mount of Olives. During that time, He was "giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen" (Acts 1:2), and "spoke about the kingdom of God" (Acts 1:3). His work of redemption accomplished, He was now completing the apostles' preparation to take the gospel to all the nations. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations", He had commanded them in Galilee, "baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you" (Mt. 28:19-20). The spread of the gospel throughout and beyond the Roman Empire was about to begin.



# Introduction

The application of Christ's finished work would begin in just 10 days, on the Day of Pentecost. God's kingdom would now begin to grow and expand throughout the entirety of the Roman Empire but would never be an earthly, political, or military kingdom. This is how New Testament scholar Dr. Simon Kistemaker described it: "The kingdom is God's rule in the hearts and lives of his people, who as citizens of this kingdom receive remission of sins and eternal life. Moreover, for the apostles the phrase *the kingdom of God* meant preaching the good news of Jesus' death and resurrection and making disciples of all nations." What Jesus told these well-trained men to do would turn the known world upside down. Their story is recorded by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles.



# Introduction

From the beginning of this series, we have cautioned against making this study a mere intellectual exercise. Now that we have carefully examined the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and the meaning of the cross, we are ready to open our New Testaments to the book of *Acts* where we will discover how the early Christians obeyed Christ and took the gospel to those who were scattered throughout the Roman Empire and beyond. Why were they so effective? How did they do it? What, if anything, are we missing today? What can we learn about the way they lived before the ruling classes and the masses of people? In short, what can we learn from these men and women about winning the world for Christ and building His kingdom?

# Church's Liturgical Calendar for 2016-2017

- **Christmas:** Sunday, December 25, 2016
- **Epiphany:** Friday, January 6, 2017 (the Magi visit Jesus)
- **Palm Sunday:** April 9 (Jesus' Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem)
- **Easter:** April 16 (the resurrection of Jesus from the dead),
- **Ascension Day:** Thursday, May 25 (40 days after Easter)
- **Pentecost Sunday:** June 4 (the Holy Spirit given to the first Christians); 10 days after the Ascension; 50 days after Jesus' resurrection from the dead (Passover), thus the name *Pentecost*, a Greek word meaning 50.

# The Spread of the Gospel

## Luke's Summary Sentences in the Book of Acts

- “And the word of God kept on **spreading**; and the number of the disciples continued to **increase greatly** in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith” (Acts 6:7).
- “But the word of the Lord continued to **grow** and to be **multiplied**” (Acts 12:24).
- “So the word of the Lord was **growing mightily** and prevailing” (Acts 19:20).

# The Growth of the Early Church

- “So then, those who had received his (Peter’s) word were baptized; and there were **added** that day about **three thousand souls**....And the Lord was **adding** to their number day by day those who were being saved” (Acts. 2:41,47). “
- “But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about **five thousand**” (Acts 4:4).
- “And all the more believers in the Lord, multitudes of men and women, were constantly **added** to their number” (Acts 5:14).
- “Now at this time while the disciples were **increasing** in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews...” (Acts 6:1).

# The Growth of the Early Church

- “So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to **increase**” (Acts 9:31).
- “And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a **large number** who believe turned to the Lord....And considerable numbers were brought (added) to the Lord” (Acts 11:21,24).
- “Then the proconsul believed when he saw what had happened (Elymas the magician went blind), being amazed at the teaching of the Lord” (Acts. 13:12).



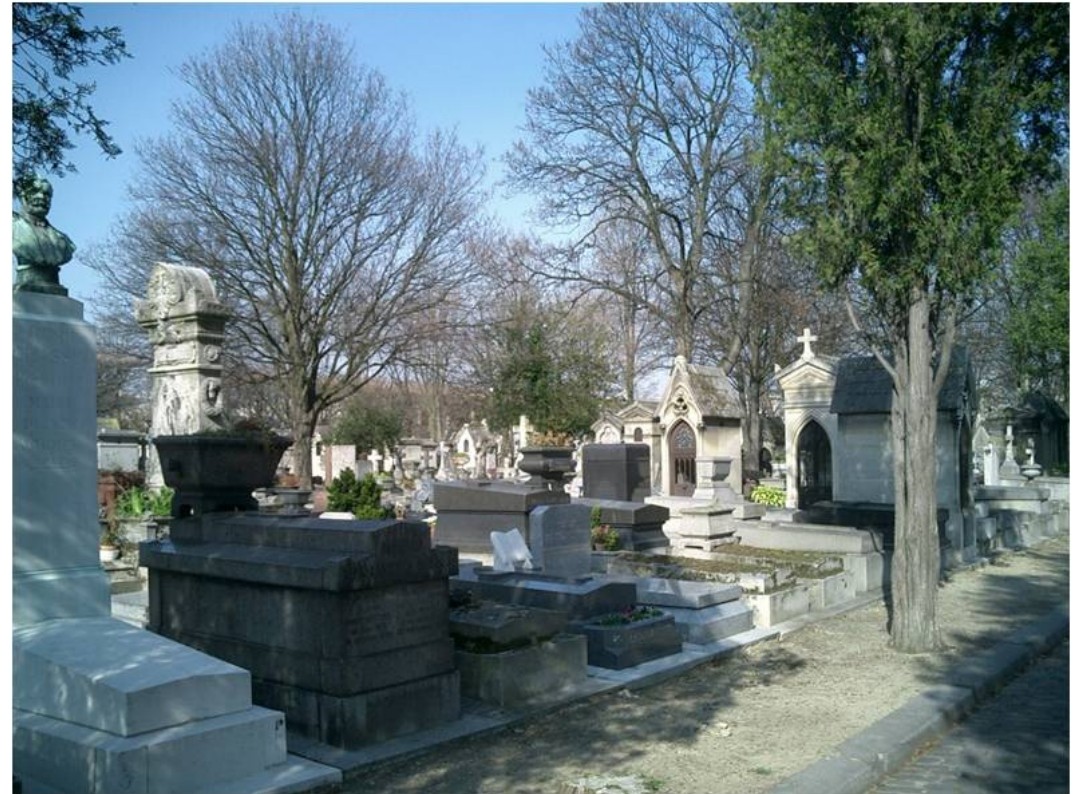
# The Growth of the Early Church

- “And after they had preached the gospel to that city and had **made many disciples**, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch” (Acts 14:21).
- “So the churches were being strengthened in the faith, and were **increasing in number** daily” (Acts. 16:5).
- “And he (Paul) stayed two full years in his own rented quarters, and was welcoming all who came to him” (Acts. 28:30).

# Famous Last Words

“The tongues of dying men  
enforce attention like deep  
harmony.”

- William Shakespeare, *Richard II*



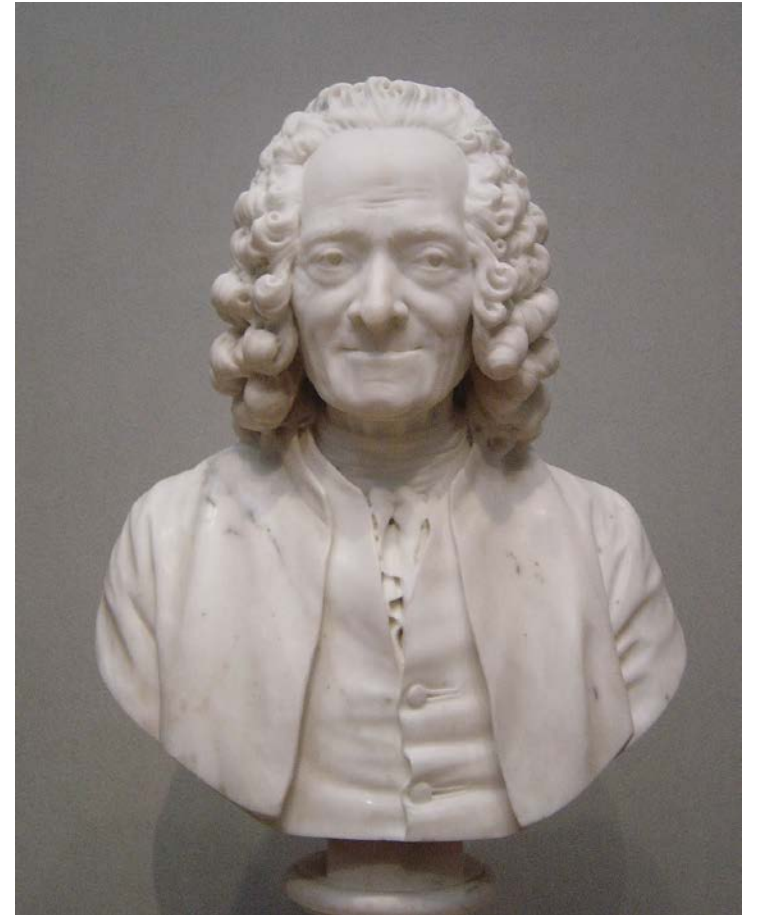
# de Talleyrand Perigord, 1754-1838

“I am suffering the pangs of  
the damned.”



# Francois Voltaire, 1694-1778

“I am abandoned by God and man! I will give you half of what I am worth if you will give me six month’s life. Then I shall go to hell; and you will go with me (speaking to his doctor). O Christ! O Jesus Christ!”





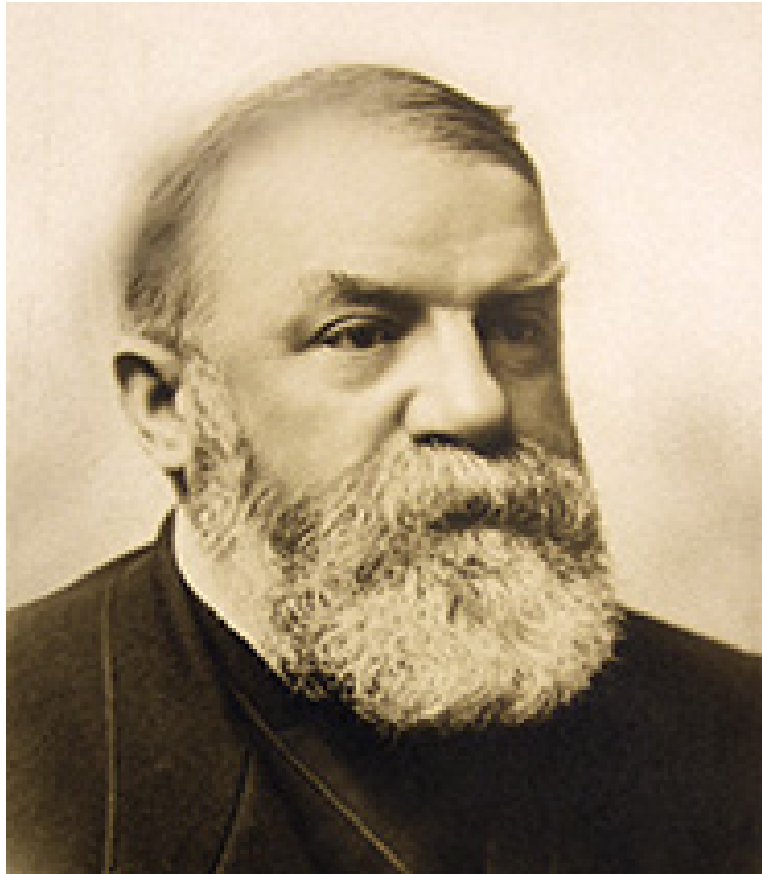
# Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson

“Let us cross over the river and  
rest under the shade of the trees.”





# D.L. Moody



“Earth recedes, Heaven opens before me!” His son, Will, concluded his father was dreaming. “No, this is no dream, Will. It is beautiful. It is like a trance. If this is death, it is sweet. There is no valley here. God is calling me, and I must go.”

# Polycarp



“Fourscore and six years have I been his servant, and He hath done me no wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King who saved me?”

# Jesus' Final Words to the Eleven

“But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth” (Acts 1:8).



# What Jesus Told The Apostles in Acts 1:8

- **The Promise:** “You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you.”
- **The Mandate:** “You shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

# The Great Commission

“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matt. 28:18-20).

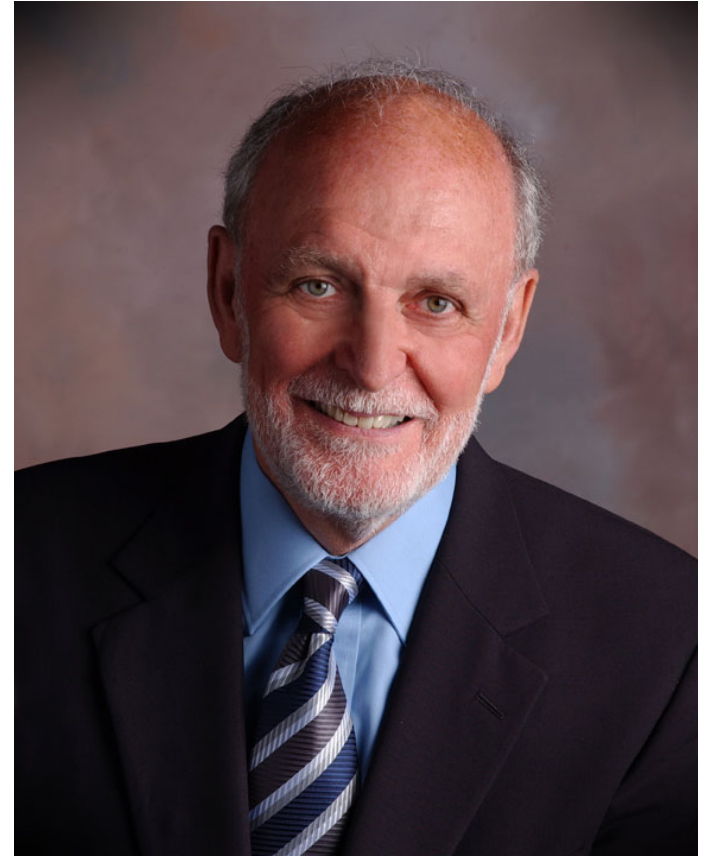


# Jesus' Authority

- The recipient of authority: Christ
- The giver of authority: the Father
- The meaning of *authority* as distinguished from *power*
- The significance of Christ's authority

“There is no place on this green earth where you can put your two feet where Jesus Christ is not in authority.”

- Stuart Briscoe



# Jesus' Command

- Three Participles in Matthew 28:19
  - a) Going
  - b) Baptizing
  - c) Teaching
- Main verb: ***Make Disciples***

***Participle***: an English verbal form that has the function of an adjective and at the same time shows such verbal features as tense and voice and capacity to take an object (Merriam-Webster Dictionary)



# Jesus' Promise

- Christ will be *with* us
- The significance of the preposition
- The meaning of the promise

The God of Israel, the Savior, is sometimes a God that hideth himself (Is. 45:15), but never a God that absenteth himself; sometimes in the dark, but never at a distance.”

- Matthew Henry

# *Disciple*: The Key Ideas

1. A disciple is a learner.
2. Taken from the root word *math*, the word *disciple* denotes a person who directs his mind to something.



# Dietrich Bonhoeffer



“The disciple is dragged out of his relative security into a life of absolute insecurity (that is, in truth, into the absolute security and safety of the fellowship of Jesus), from a life which is observable and calculable [predictable] (it is, in fact, quite incalculable) into a life where everything is unobservable and fortuitous [occurring by chance] (that is, into one which is necessary and calculable), out of the realm of finite (which is in truth the infinite) into the realm of infinite possibilities (which is the one liberating reality). Again it is not universal law. Rather it is the exact opposite of all legality. It is nothing else than bondage to Jesus Christ alone, completely breaking through every programme, every ideal, every set of laws. No other significance is possible, since Jesus is the only significance. Beside Jesus nothing has any significance. He alone matters.”



# The Power of Spiritual Multiplication

Spiritual Multiplication II Timothy 2:2	
Paul	Maker of DiscipleMakers
↓	↓
Timothy	DiscipleMaker
↓	↓
Faithful Men	Discipler
↓	↓
Others	Disciple

# Spiritual Multiplication

<b>Year 1</b> 1	<b>Year 2</b> 2	<b>Year 3</b> 4	<b>Year 4</b> 8	<b>Year 5</b> 16	<b>Year 6</b> 32	<b>Year 7</b> 64	<b>Year 8</b> 128
<b>Year 9</b> 256	<b>Year 10</b> 512	<b>Year 11</b> 1,024	<b>Year 12</b> 2,048	<b>Year 13</b> 4,096	<b>Year 14</b> 8,192	<b>Year 15</b> 16,384	<b>Year 16</b> 32,768
<b>Year 17</b> 65,536	<b>Year 18</b> 131,072	<b>Year 19</b> 262,144	<b>Year 20</b> 524,288	<b>Year 21</b> 1,048,576	<b>Year 22</b> 2,097,152	<b>Year 23</b> 4,194,304	<b>Year 24</b> 8,388,608
<b>Year 25</b> 16,777,216	<b>Year 26</b> 33,554,432	<b>Year 27</b> 67,108,864	<b>Year 28</b> 134,217,728	<b>Year 29</b> 268,435,456	<b>Year 30</b> 536,870,912	<b>Year 31</b> 1,073,741,824	<b>Year 32</b> 2,147,483,648
<b>Year 33</b> 4,294,967,296	<b>Year 34</b> 8,589,934,592						

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the world population estimate as of November 26, 2016 is **7,467,066,738**. The world population reached 6 billion on June 23, 1999 at 7:51 a.m. EDT.

# Charles H. Spurgeon

“I would quite as soon not be as live to be a useless thing. Better far to fatten the fields with one’s own corpse, than to lie rotting above ground in idleness.”



# John Wesley

“Give me a hundred men who fear nothing but God, and who hate nothing but sin, and who know nothing but Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and I will shake the world.”

