

History of Christianity

Welcome!

Fullness of Time

- **History or circumstance was not accidental, but part of God's design**
- **True of the church too, ability to spread the gospel**
- **Spread Jews to Jews, then to Gentiles, within the borders of the Roman empire, then outside of it**

Judaism in Palestine

- **Palestine, a land besieged**
- **Alexander 4th Century BCE**
- **Hellenism**
- **Rome**
- **Tension with Rome**
- **Ends with destruction of Jerusalem**

Judaism in Palestine

- **Jewish Parties:**
- **Pharisees**
- **Sadducees**
- **Zealots**
- **Essenes**
- **All parties: Monotheism and Eschatology**

Diaspora Judaism

- **Jews outside of Palestine**
- **Septuagint (LXX)**
- **Jewish scripture and Greek philosophy – Philo**
- **Tools for Christianity**

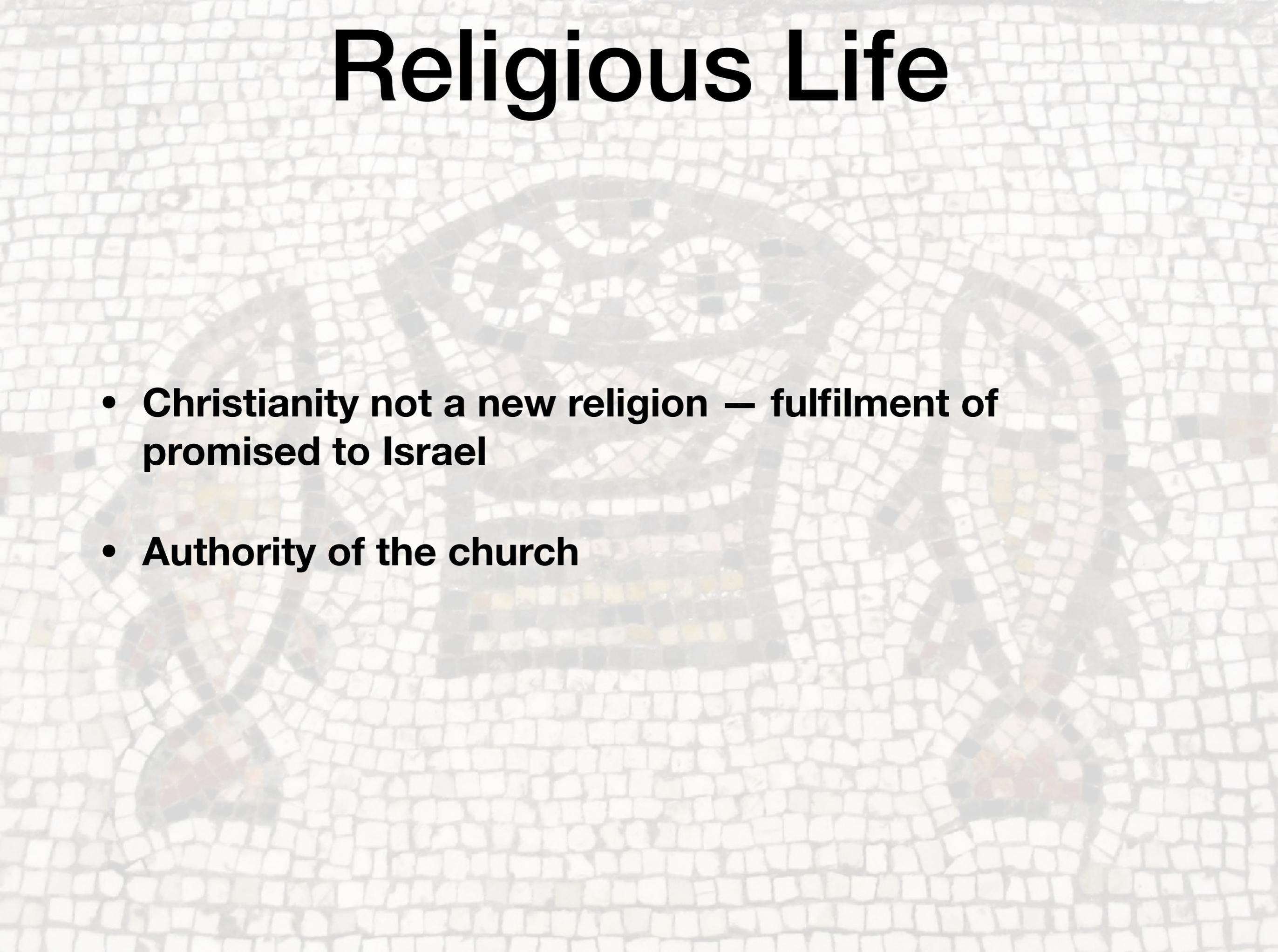
Greco-Roman World

- **Roman empire beneficial for Christian message**
- **and detriment**
- **Greek allies — Platonism and Stoicism**

Church in Jerusalem

- **Early church idealized — existing tensions among Christian Jews**
- **Distinct from apostles, but approved by apostles**
- **Hellenistic Jewish Christians a bridge to Gentile world**

Religious Life



- **Christianity not a new religion – fulfilment of promised to Israel**
- **Authority of the church**

Waning of Jewish Church

- **Persecution becomes more fierce**
- **Jewish nationalism reached boiling point 66 CE**
- **Jew and Gentile relations**

Mission to Gentiles

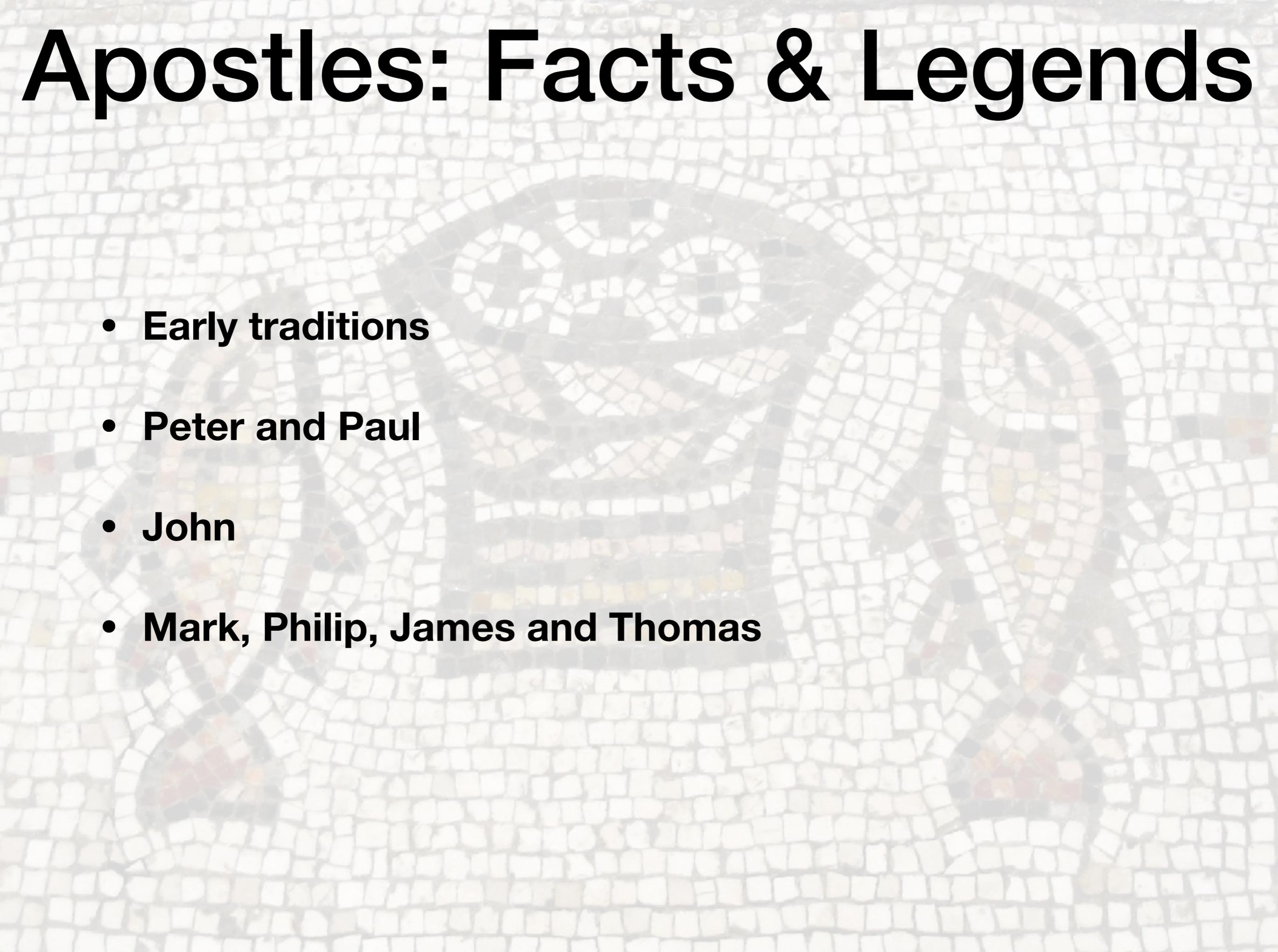
Scope of the Mission

- **Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria**
- **Surprised by Gentiles**
- **Gentiles and the Law — tensions**

Paul's Work

- **Chosen**
- **Traveling**
- **Writing**
- **Jew first and also, equally to the Greek**
- **Not a new religion**
- **Farther away religiously, more training**

Apostles: Facts & Legends

A large, faint mosaic of the apostles Peter and Paul is visible in the background. Peter is on the left, wearing a red sash and holding a key. Paul is on the right, wearing a blue sash and holding a sword. The mosaic is composed of small, light-colored tiles.

- **Early traditions**
- **Peter and Paul**
- **John**
- **Mark, Philip, James and Thomas**

First Conflicts w/State

- **Hard road from beginning**
- **Remains to this day**
- **Different reasons, ways and means**

A New Jewish Sect

- **Jews and the Messiah – fulfillment**
- **Jewish Heretics**
- **Rome sees it all the same**
- **Different groups, different treatment**

Persecution of Nero

- **Nero's reputation**
- **The Great fire of 64 CE**
- **Christian scapegoats**

Tacitus Quote

In spite of every human effort, of the emperor's largesse, and of the sacrifices made to the gods, nothing sufficed to allay suspicion nor to destroy the opinion that the fire had been ordered. Therefore, in order to destroy this rumour, Nero blamed the Christians, who are hated for their abominations, and punished them with refined cruelty. Christ, from whom they take their name, was executed by Pontius Pilate during the reign of Tiberius. Stopped for a moment, this evil superstition reappeared, not only in Judea, where was the root of the evil, but also in Rome, where all things sordid and abominable from every corner of the world come together. Thus, first those who confessed [that they were Christians] were arrested, and on the basis of their testimony a great number were condemned, although not so much for the fire itself as for their hatred of humankind.

Persecution of Nero

- **Good look into pagan perspective on Christians**
- **Good look at popular view of Nero**
- **Cultured life tied up with worship**

Tacitus Quote

Before killing the Christians, Nero used them to amuse the people. Some were dressed in furs, to be killed by dogs. Others were crucified. Still others were set on fire early in the night, so that they might illumine it. Nero opened his own gardens for these shows, and in the circus he himself became a spectacle, for he mingled with the people dressed as a charioteer, or he rode around in his chariot. All of this aroused the mercy of the people, even against culprits who deserved an exemplary punishment, for it was clear that they were not being destroyed for the common good, but rather to satisfy the cruelty of one person.

Persecution of Nero

- **Peter and Paul**
- **Conviction of being Christian**
- **End of Nero; small respite**

Persecution of Domitian

- **Ignorant of the source of persecution – traditions?**
- **Laws against Jews and Christians**
- **Rome and Asia Minor**
- **Revelation**

Confessions

Chapter 1, How to Begin? (pg. 3-6)

"our heart is unstable until stabilized in you." (pg. 3) How can our hearts become stabilized in God?

Chapter 2, In Fans (pg. 7-10)

"Where could such a creature come from, Lord, but you?" (pg. 8) Why is infant stage significant to Augustine since he can't remember it?

Chapter 3, Childhood (pg. 11-14)

"was it for my own good to be given free rein to sin for a while, or was I not, in fact, given free rein?" (pg. 14) How could withholding baptism be considered withholding freedom?

Chapter 4, Schooling (pg. 15-18)

Augustine links discipline in school with God's discipline -- what's the relationship?

Chapter 5, Conforming...Society (pg. 19-23)

What is it that causes our hearts to move from God?