

THE R.U.S.H. BIBLE STUDY

THE HEROES OF THE CHURCH



KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT FAST



WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY FIRST EDITION 2020 VER.26

DAVID HOBRATH

*A very special thanks to Stacey Hobrath, Ray and Julie Espinoza, and Stacey Scott,
for their assistance in compiling and correcting this document.*

ΑΒΓ

This lesson on the heroes of the church will attempt to re-introduce some of the names that played a role in how we have survived as a global body of believers to the present day.

ΔΕΖ

In order for the information included in this lesson to be considered even remotely sufficient it must make mention of those that came before the start of the church in the Book of Acts.

ΗΘΙ

The list of authors, kings, prophets, judges, both named and anonymous, compile a huge list of scriptural custodians from Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden up to the ascension of Jesus and the founding of the church in the 2nd chapter of Acts.

ΚΛΜ

This group of predecessors are included and discussed in detail, in the R.U.S.H. Bible Study, and in the additional supplemental studies packets we have provided throughout the year.

ΝΞΟ

This lesson starts with the stories of the 12 disciples and the Apostle Paul, and continues on to the reasonable present day 21st century church.

ΠΡΣ

This lesson should provide a lifetime supply of names, dates, events, and places for the history buff to continue their own research.

ΤΥΦ

Enjoy

ΧΨΩ

THE LIFE OF THE 12 DISCIPLES OF CHRIST, REPEATED FROM THE RBS LESSON ON LUKE IN CHAPTER 6

PETER (AKA SIMON PETER, SIMON BAR JONA, CEPHAS)

He is always named 1st. A married fisherman. He was from Galilee.

Josephus described the Galileans this way, "They were ever fond of innovation and by nature disposed to change and delighted in sedition. They were ever ready to follow the leader and to begin an insurrection. They were quick in temper and given to quarreling and they were very chivalrous men." The Talmud says this of the Galileans, "They were more anxious for honor than for gain, quick-tempered, impulsive, emotional, easily aroused by an appeal to adventure, loyal to the end."

Simon Peter, son of Jonas, was a fisherman who lived in Bethsaida and Capernaum. He did evangelistic and missionary work among the Jews, going as far as Babylon. He was a member of the Inner Circle and authored the two New Testament epistles which bear his name. Tradition says he was crucified, head downward, in Rome. Peter was martyred on a cross. Peter requested that he might be crucified head downward for he was not worthy to die as his Lord had died. Many attribute the Gospel of Mark to Peter because Mark was his disciple, and later, travelled with Peter as his interpreter. Peter never learned Greek, Mark filled that roll. Buried in Rome.

JAMES THE ELDER. (AKA BOAGERNES, SON OF THUNDER, JAMES THE GREAT)

James, the Elder, Boanerges, son of Zebedee and Salome, brother of John the Apostle; a fisherman who lived in Bethsaida, Capernaum and Jerusalem. He preached in Jerusalem and Judea and was beheaded by Herod, AD 44. He was a member of the Inner Circle, so called because they were accorded special privileges. The New Testament tells us very little about James. His name never appears apart from that of his brother, John. They were an inseparable pair. He was a man of courage and forgiveness, a man without jealousy, living in the shadow of John, a man of extraordinary faith, the first of the twelve to become a martyr (Acts 12). Buried in Spain.

JOHN BOANERGES, SON OF ZEBEDEE AND SALOME, BROTHER OF JAMES. (AKA JOHN THE BELOVED, JOHN THE EVANGELIST, JOHN THE REVEALER, AND JOHN THE REVELATOR)

He was known as the Beloved Disciple. A fisherman who lived in Bethsaida, Capernaum and Jerusalem, he was a member of the Inner Circle. He wrote the Gospel of John, I John, II John and Revelation. He was given the earthly responsibility for Mary the mother of Jesus at the cross in John 19, he prepared the upper room for the last supper and out ran Peter at the tomb when Jesus rose from the dead in John 20. He preached among the churches of Asia Minor. Banished to the Isle of Patmos, he was later freed and died a natural death in Ephesus, living with Timothy, and working in the churches there where Timothy was the Bishop in that region. Buried in Turkey.

ANDREW, THE BROTHER OF PETER, AND A SON OF JONAS. (AKA PROTOKLETOS, OR, FIRST CALLED)

He lived in Bethsaida and Capernaum and was a fisherman before Jesus called him. Originally he was a disciple of John the Baptist. Andrew brought his brother, Peter, to Jesus. According to tradition, it was in Achaia, Greece, in the town of Patra that Andrew died a martyr. When Governor Aepeas' wife was healed and converted to the Christian faith, and shortly after that the Governor's brother became a Christian. Aepeas was enraged. He arrested Andrew and condemned him to die on the cross. Andrew, feeling unworthy to be crucified on the same-shaped cross as his Master, begged that his be different. So, he was crucified on an X-shaped cross. Buried in Amalfi Italy.

BARTHOLOMEW, SON OF TALMAI. (AKA NATHANIEL)

Lived in Cana of Galilee. Tradition says he was a missionary in Armenia. A number of scholars believe that he was the only one of the 12 disciples who came from royal blood, or noble birth. His name means Son of Tolmai or Talmai. Talmai was king of Geshur whose daughter, Maacah, was the wife of David, mother of Absalom. This would be a designation of that royal lineage.

Bartholomew's name appears with every list of the disciples. This was not a first name, however; it was his second name. His first name was Nathanael, whom Jesus called "An Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile" (John 1:47). Tradition says that he preached in India, and Armenia, and his death seems to have taken place there. He died as a martyr for his Lord. He was flayed alive, his skin peeled off his body with knives.

Buried in Rome.

=====

JAMES SON OF ALPHEUS, (AKA JAMES THE LESS OR LESSER, JAMES THE YOUNGER) LIVED IN GALILEE. HE WAS THE BROTHER OF THE APOSTLE JUDE.

According to tradition he preached in Palestine and Egypt and was stoned to death in Egypt. James was one of the little-known disciples. Some scholars believe he was the brother of Matthew, the tax collector whose father also was named Alpheas. Tradition states he was crucified in Persia, near Sinai. He is often mistaken in literature with James the brother of Christ who pastored the main church in Jerusalem and wrote the Epistle of James, and also with James the Elder.

Buried in Rome.

=====

JUDE, (AKA THADDEUS, OR LEBBEUS), SON OF ALPHEUS. HE WAS A BROTHER OF JAMES THE YOUNGER.

He was one of the least known Apostles and lived in Galilee. Tradition says he preached in Assyria and Persia and died a martyr in Persia. Jerome called Jude "Trinomious" which means "a man with three names." In Mark 3:18 he is called Thaddeus. In Matthew 10:3 he is called Lebbeus. His surname was Thaddeus. In Luke 6:16 and Acts 1:13 he is called Judas the brother of James. It is said that Jude went to preach the gospel in Edessa near the Euphrates River. There he healed many, and many believed in the name of the Master. He was killed with arrows at Ararat. Thaddeus also was called Judas the Zealot.

Buried in Rome.

=====

MATTHEW, (AKA LEVI, SON OF ALPHEUS) LIVED IN CAPERNAUM. HE WAS A PUBLICAN OR TAX COLLECTOR.

He wrote the Gospel that bears his name. He died a martyr in Ethiopia. It is likely that James the lesser, who was one of the twelve Apostles, was Matthew's brother, also the son of Alpheus. Although we know little about Matthew personally, the outstanding fact about him is that he was a tax collector. The King James Version calls him a publican, which in Latin is Publicanus, meaning engaged in public service, a man who handled public money, or a tax gatherer. Matthew was unlike the other Apostles, who were mostly fishermen. He could use a pen, and by his pen he became the first man to present to the world, in the Hebrew language, an account of the teaching of Jesus. It is clearly impossible to estimate the debt that Christianity owes to this despised tax gatherer. Matthew became the first man to write down the teachings of Jesus. His ministry was in Persia (Iran), Macedonia (Balkan Peninsula in southern Europe), Syria (east of Israel), Parthia (farther east from Persia), Media (Ancient area of modern Kurdistan), and Ethiopia (Horn of Africa). Matthew dies a martyr c. 60 AD. He was staked and speared to the ground after he questioned the morals of King Hirtacus of Ethiopia, who was lusting after a young lady who had dedicated her life to the service of the church.

Buried in Sicily.

PHILIP CAME FROM BETHSAIDA, THE TOWN FROM WHICH PETER AND ANDREW CAME (JOHN 1:44). THE LIKELIHOOD IS THAT HE, TOO, WAS A FISHERMAN.

When Philip met Christ, he immediately found Nathaniel and told him that "we have found him, of whom Moses ... and the prophets, did write." In Acts 6:5, we have Philip as one of the seven ordained deacons. Some say this is a different Philip. Some believe this is the Apostle. If this is the same Philip, then his personality came more to life because he had a successful campaign in Samaria. He led the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ (Acts 8:26). He also stayed with Paul in Caesarea (Acts 21:8) and was one of the major figures in the missionary enterprise of the early church. Tradition says that the disciple Philip preached in Phrygia and Scythia. He died a martyr at Hierapolis when he was crucified on a tall cross.

Buried in Rome.

=====

SIMON, (AKA SIMON THE ZEALOT, SIMON THE CANAANITE OR SIMON ZELOTES), LIVED IN GALILEE.

The Zealots were fanatical Jewish Nationalists who had heroic disregard for the suffering involved and the struggle for what they regarded as the purity of their faith. The Zealots were crazed with hatred for the Romans. It was this hate for Rome that destroyed the city of Jerusalem. Josephus says the Zealots were reckless persons, zealous in good practices and extravagant and reckless in the worst kind of actions. Simon Zelotes ministered in Persia, (modern day Iran), and was stabbed to death for refusing to worship the sun god.

Buried in Rome.

=====

THOMAS (AKA DIDYMUS, JUDAS THOMAS, DOUBTING THOMAS) LIVED IN GALILEE.

Sometimes called Judas, he was present at the resurrection of Lazarus. It is said that he was commissioned to build a palace for the king of India, he labored in Parthia, Persia, and India, suffering martyrdom near Madras, at Mt. St. Thomas, India.

Buried in India.

=====

JUDAS ISCARIOT, THE TRAITOR, WAS THE SON OF SIMON WHO LIVED IN KERIOTH OF JUDAH.

He betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver and afterwards hanged himself. He was a Judean and the rest of the disciples were Galileans. He was the treasurer of the band and among the outspoken leaders. It is said that Judas was a violent Jewish Nationalist who had followed Jesus in hope that through Him his nationalistic flame and dreams might be realized.

Unknown grave.

=====

MATTHIAS WAS SELECTED TO REPLACE JUDAS AS RECORDED IN ACTS 1:15-26.

The other man who was also in consideration was named Joseph or Barsabas, and surnamed Justus. Lots were cast and eventually Matthias was chosen by the casting of lots. He, from then on, was numbered with the eleven apostles. The Bible says that Matthias was with Jesus from His baptism until his resurrection, and also in the upper room. Besides the book of Acts, Matthias isn't mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. Matthias spread the gospel on the shores of the Caspian Sea and Cappadocia (central Turkey). Jerome and the early Christian writers Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius of Caesarea attest that Matthias was among the 72 disciples paired off and dispatched by Jesus. He was martyred by crucifixion and, according to other legends, chopped apart. His ministry was so vast and lasting that Helena, mother of the Roman emperor Constantine the Great, almost 300 years later, transported Matthias' belongings and remains from Jerusalem to Rome.

(I should mention that according to some Greek sources, the remains of the apostle are buried in the castle of Gonio-Apsaros, in Georgia.)

=====

Next up is the Apostle Paul who wrote 13 of the 27 books in the New Testament. 14 if you count Hebrews.

APPROXIMATE TIMELINE: APOSTLE PAUL'S PHYSICAL BIRTH TO FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY 40 to 41 A.D.

- 2 A.D.** **His Physical Birth in Tarsus**
Saul's (Paul's) was born in the city of Tarsus to an Israelite family of the tribe of Benjamin (Philippians 3:5). He is circumcised on the eighth day; in compliance with the law of God (Genesis 17:12, Leviticus 12:3, Philippians 3:5).
- 12 to 15 A.D.** **Religious Training in Jerusalem**
Saul's family sends him to Jerusalem to be taught in a Pharisaic Rabbinical school. The school is led by the well-respected Rabbi Gamaliel (see Acts 5:34) who personally teaches the future apostle (Acts 22:3).
- 32 A.D.** **Martyrdom of Stephen**
Stephen is stoned to death for his testimony about the Lord Jesus (Acts 6-7). He is one of the first servants appointed by the early church (Acts 6:1-6) to minister to the widows. A zealous Saul (Paul) consents to and witnesses Stephen's death (Acts 7:58 - 8:1).
- 33 A.D.** **The Conversion of Saul: His Spiritual Birth**
Saul requests and receives, from the High Priest, permission to go to search for those who believe in the Lord Jesus. He is given the authority to arrest anyone who attends a Synagogue and professes belief in "the Way." Those arrested are to be taken back to Jerusalem for trial and punishment (Acts 9:1-2). As Saul approaches the city, a burst of light suddenly appears and causes him to fall to the ground (Acts 9:3-4). He then hears the voice of the Lord Jesus asking why he is persecuting Christ (Acts 9:4). Blinded, he is led to Damascus where his repentance leads to his repentance, as he is healed, baptized, and follows Christ wholeheartedly (Acts 9:4-18).
- 33 to 36 A.D.** **Paul is taught by the Lord Jesus Christ**
After his conversion and then fleeing Damascus due to persecution (Acts 9:20-25), Paul spends 3 years in Nabataean Arabia (modern day Turkey). Some biblical scholars believe that God gave him 3 years there because the original 12 had 3 years with Jesus. Paul was given his 3 years to learn directly from the Lord Jesus face to face. (1 Corinthians 15:8, Galatians 1:11-12, 15-18).
- 36 A.D.** **Paul's First Visit to Jerusalem after His Conversion to Christ**
After three years in Arabia, Paul journeys back to Damascus (Galatians 1:17). He then travels to Jerusalem and stays almost two weeks (Acts 9:26, Galatians 1:18-19). Paul's preaching angers some Jews to the point where they plot to take his life (Acts 9:29). He is soon sent by church brethren to Caesarea and back home to Tarsus (Acts 9:30).
- 36 to 40 A.D.** **Staying Home in Tarsus** Apostle Paul stays in his hometown of Tarsus for four years.
- 40 to 41 A.D.** **Growth in the Antioch Church**
Men from Cyprus and Cyrene travel to Antioch of Syria and to reach out to Gentiles concerning the Gospel of Jesus Christ. God blesses their efforts and a great number of people become followers of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 11:20-21). Barnabas travels to Tarsus to seek Paul's help

with teaching the newly converted Syrian Antioch Gentiles. They journey from Tarsus back to Antioch and stay in the city for an entire year (Acts 11:25-26).

- 42 A.D.** **A Famine is Prophesized**
God, in Antioch, reveals through the Prophet Agabus that a 3-year famine will occur (Acts 11:27-28).
- 44 A.D.** **Famine relief to Jerusalem**
Paul and Barnabas escort food and relief supplies to Jerusalem, after which they return to Antioch (Acts 12:25).
- 44 to 46 A.D.** **Apostle Paul's First Missionary Journey begins**
Paul and Barnabas are ordained by the church as the two are set apart for the work the Lord had for them to accomplish (Acts 13:1-3). From Syrian Antioch Paul, Barnabas and John Mark begin the first missionary journey (Acts 13:4-52, 14:1-25). They travel to Salamis on the island of Cyprus. After preaching the gospel they walk to Paphos on the other side of the island. In Paphos the evangelistic team meets with the island's governor and his friend Elymas, a sorcerer. Paul, after Elymas tries to prevent the governor from receiving and accepting the gospel message, renders the sorcerer blind through a miracle (Acts 13:6-12).
- John Mark Returns to Jerusalem**
Paul, Barnabas, and Mark sail to Perga. After docking, John Mark leaves and returns to Jerusalem (Acts 13:13). The two evangelists leave Perga and go to Pisidian Antioch.
- Rejected**
In Antioch Paul and Barnabas attend a synagogue where the apostle powerfully preaches the gospel (Acts 13:16-41). Although many in the city initially believe what is taught, they are soon turned against the gospel by some Jews who do not believe Jesus is the Messiah (Acts 13:42). The evangelists are thrown out of the area and travel to Iconium. As his custom was Paul preaches in a local synagogue. Once again, sadly, unbelieving Jews stir up many in the city to oppose the truth. After learning of a plot to have them stoned to death, the two preachers flee to Lystra (Acts 14:1-6).
- Honored then Stoned**
In Lystra Paul heals a crippled man. Those who see the miracle are so amazed that they try to worship the evangelists like gods (Acts 14:6-13)! Soon, however, Jews from other areas come to the city in order to cause trouble for the two apostles. The crowds are stirred up against Paul and attempt to stone him to death. After the stoning, his "dead body" is dragged out of Lystra. He miraculously regains consciousness and re-enters the city. The next day he and Barnabas travel to Derbe (Acts 14:19-20).
- A few more cities**
Paul and Barnabas preach the gospel in Derbe then retrace their steps back through Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. They ultimately arrive back at Syrian Antioch (Acts 14:21-26). It is after this point in his life as Paul would go to Corinth that he would write the Romans this letter in 57 A.D.
- Martyrdom**
Paul was beheaded after years of ministry in Rome as part of the executions of the Christians ordered and carried out by Emperor Nero after Nero set fire to Rome and blamed the church. This occurred in 64 AD.

What the Disciples and the Apostle Paul, along with their initial followers accomplished, is nothing short of a super-natural move of God. Remember that the church was “*religio prava*,” illegal and opposed to the gods of the Roman government. Christians were rounded up and killed in huge numbers empire-wide on several occasions.

When they weren’t being targeted by the Roman government, they established food drives and other helps which at 1 point in 250AD was feeding 1500 homeless people a day!

When the horrible Emperor “**Julian the Apostate**” who hated the message of Christ, was planning to slaughter them he wrote this:

“Christianity has been specially advanced through the loving service rendered to strangers and through their care of the burial of the dead. It is a scandal that there is not a single Jew who is a beggar and that the Christians care not only for their own poor but for ours as well; while those who belong to us look in vain for the help we should render them.”

They didn’t have church buildings until the 3rd century as far as we have evidence for, so almost all witness to the gospel message was personal, one on one. House meetings and lifestyle evangelism.

Another powerful testimony of the early church was miracles. All of them. Barnabas, you will remember from Acts who was the Gospel writer Mark’s, elder relative, traveled the world healing the sick and working miracles. His preaching and healing ministry was so vast that the Jewish leadership came all the way from Syria to torture and then stone him to death. Mark hid the body and it was found 350 years later with a copy of The Gospel of Matthew *in Hebrew* on his chest.

Rome was the global center of early Christianity, and Paul was the head of the church in Rome. Some today think that title belongs to Peter, but Peter was only in Rome for about 2 weeks. Paul was in Rome for several years. When Emperor Nero was seeking to please the Jews by blaming Christians for the Roman fires he set, he crucified Peter immediately. But Paul was a Roman citizen. It was against the Roman law to kill him without a trial, and if found guilty, he had to be killed painlessly.

After Paul was martyred, his disciple **Linus** (mentioned in 2nd Timothy), led the church in Rome. After Linus, **Anacletis**, then the great **Clement of Rome**. Those 3 that followed Paul were all his disciples. They all have volumes of epistles they have written that survive to this day and are available, and are wonderful. Clement is mentioned by Paul in Philippians who says under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that Clements name is written in the Book of Life.

The list of people in this circle is huge. One of them are **Ignatius** (thrown to the lions by Emp. Trajan).

Below is a letter from **Trajan** to **Pliny** concerning Christians.

“You observed proper procedure, my dear Pliny, in sifting the cases of those who had been denounced to you as Christians. For it is not possible to lay down any general rule to serve as a kind of fixed standard. They are not to be sought out; if they are denounced and proved guilty, they are to be punished, with this reservation, that whoever denies that he is a Christian and really proves it--that is, by worshiping our gods--even though he was under suspicion in the past, shall obtain pardon through repentance. But anonymously posted accusations ought to have no place in any prosecution. For this is both a dangerous kind of precedent and out of keeping with the spirit of our age.”

Next **Justin Martyr**: He was respected by early Christians and wrote this letter to **Emperor Antoninus Pius** (*one of the few Emperors who was good to the Christians*) and described the believers:

"We formerly rejoiced in uncleanness of life, but now love only chastity; before we used the magic arts, but now dedicate ourselves to the true and unbegotten God; before we loved money and possessions more than anything, but now we share what we have and to everyone who is in need; before we hated one another and killed one another and would not eat with those of another race, but now since the manifestation of Christ, we have come to a common life and pray for our enemies and try to win over those who hate us without just cause."

True to his name he was beheaded in 165AD

Tertullian: Born in 150AD, son of a Roman Captain, became a lawyer and by 40 years old became a Christian. He was well educated and born into wealth. He had mad skills. He used his training as a lawyer to defend the gospel and debate the best of the best of the pagan scholars and soundly defeated their arguments. Today 31 of his writings exist intact.

Here is a quote:

"...the church is self-supporting and provided the most peaceful citizens to the state. The government should be protecting such citizens, not persecuting them."

Tertullian also saw, however, that the persecution of the church by Rome actually strengthened the Church:

"It is bait that wins men for (our) school. The oftener we are mown down by you, the more in number we grow: the blood of Christians is seed [of the church]."

Next **Polycarp**: A disciple of the Apostle John. I've read all his writings. You should to.

Here's the quote from his martyrdom.

***"Eighty and six years have I served Him, and he never did me any injury;
how then can I blaspheme my King and my Savior."***

Here's the story of his last day:

Polycarp was a personal disciple of the Apostle John. As an old man, he was the bishop of the Church at Smyrna in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey). Persecution against the Christians broke out there and believers were being fed to the wild beasts in the arena. The crowd began to call for the Christians' leader Polycarp. So the authorities sent out a search party to bring him in. They tortured two slave boys to reveal where Polycarp was being hidden.

It was a Friday afternoon. Polycarp was resting upstairs in a country home. They came in like a posse, fully armed as if they were arresting a dangerous criminal. Polycarp's friends wanted to sneak him out, but he refused, saying, "God's will be done." (The Christians there taught that a believer was not to make oneself available for martyrdom and should not seek it out, but neither should he/she avoid it when there was no choice.)

In one of the most touching instances of Christian grace imaginable, Polycarp welcomed his captors as if they were friends, talked with them and ordered that food and drink be served to them. Then Polycarp made one request: one hour to pray before they took him away. The officers overhearing his prayers (that went on for two hours) began to have second thoughts. What were they doing arresting an old man like this?

Despite the cries of the crowd, the Roman authorities saw the senselessness of making this aged man a martyr. So when Polycarp was brought into the arena, the proconsul pled with him: "Curse Christ and I will release you."
REPLY: "Eighty-six years I have served Him. He had never done me wrong. How then can I blaspheme my King who has saved me?"

The proconsul reached for an acceptable way out: "Then do this, old man. Just swear by the genius of the emperor and that will be sufficient." (*The "genius" was sort of the "spirit" of the emperor. To do this would be a recognition of the pagan gods and religion.*)

REPLY: "If you imagine for a moment that I would do that, then I think you pretend that you don't know who I am. Hear it plainly. I am a Christian."

More entreaties. Polycarp stood firm.

The proconsul threatened him with the wild beasts.

REPLY: "Bring them forth. I would change my mind if it meant going from the worse to the better, but not to change from the right to the wrong."

The proconsul's patience was gone: "I will have you burned alive."

REPLY: "You threaten fire that burns for an hour and is over. But the judgment on the ungodly is forever."

The fire was prepared. Polycarp lifted his eyes to heaven and prayed: "Father, I bless you that you have deemed me worthy of this day and hour, that I might take a portion of the martyrs in the cup of Christ. . . Among these may I today be welcome before thy face as a rich and acceptable sacrifice."

As the fire engulfed him, the believers noted that it smelled not so much like flesh burning as a loaf baking. He was finished off with the stab of a dagger. His followers gathered his remains like precious jewels and buried them on February 22, a day they set aside to be remembered. The year was probably 155. In the strange way known to the eyes of faith, it was as much a day of triumph as it was a day of tragedy.

These paragraphs are condensed from the longer account that was compiled by the Christians at Smyrna and sent as a letter to believers throughout the region. Check it out in Foxes Book of Martyrs.

General Andrew is the next hero of the church. A decorated soldier climbed to the ranks of General in the Syrian army under the idol-worshipper **Governor Antiochus of Syria**. In the 3rd century, while a soldier, he accepted Christ.

Soon he would face the Persian army. God impressed on him through the testimony of the Judge Gideon from the Bible to face them with only 1,000 soldiers.

He preaches a sermon to his troops before the battle hoping to convert some to Christianity. Here is a quote.

"This is the right time for you to come to a full knowledge of God in heaven," he said, adding that the gods of the pagans were really demons.

"My God, the one who made heaven and earth, is the true God."

He promised that God would help those who call upon him. Yes, the enemy was great and had won many battles in the past.

"But come on, put aside your error, call, with me, upon him who is truly God, and you will see your foes dead and driven away before you, like smoke or like dust from the threshing-floor."

Andrew led his men in prayer. Completely convinced by his words, the small force made a bold charge and put the Persians to flight. The victory seemed so supernatural that the entire group believed. All 1,000 men joined Andrew in spreading the gospel. When Governor Antiochus found out, he wasn't happy about it.

When Antiochus learned that Andrew had "gone mad" and was spreading the teachings of the crucified one. He immediately sent a force to discover the truth. Andrew was brought before Antiochus along with several of his men. When Andrew and the other believers stood by their faith in Christ, Antiochus threatened them with torment, reminding them that he had already killed many Christians with terrible tortures.

The fact that other Christians had stood true under torment gave Andrew courage. With his typical boldness he said, "...If all those that you have named...have emerged victors, and carry their athletic crowns in the presence of Christ--who is God--why would I, a friend, or rather servant of My Lord Jesus Christ, not be eager also to remain forever constant, in order to enjoy the same rewards with them?"

Antiochus tortured Andrew on a heated bronze bed and treated his followers to similar pains. He then threw them into prison and sent off a secret letter to Emperor Maximinian, asking for instructions as to what to do. Maximinian realized that to kill a hero like Andrew for no good reason would undermine public confidence in justice. He ordered Antiochus to release the men and find an excuse later to punish Andrew.

Celicia's military commander was **Seleucus**, a pagan who detested Christianity. Antiochus persuaded Seleucus to hunt Andrew down. Andrew was a fearless man, but took the words of Christ literally, when he said, if they persecute you in one city, flee to another. He and his men fled from place to place. Finally they were cornered near the straits of Taurus. With his help, some of Andrew's men escaped. But Andrew was bound, tortured and killed on this day, August 19, 302 with 2,593 other Christian soldiers.

From around 280 to 305 **Diocletian** reigns as Emperor of a very large Rome. He divides his responsibilities with a fellow soldier named **Maximinian** to be co-Emperor to better serve the expansive empire. Because the finances of a world empire were so vast he reorganized the administration, and in so doing promoted a man who would do Christians much harm. **Galerius Valerius Maximianus**.

Galerius writes to Diocletian an argument that Christianity was so prevalent it was a threat. He claims in writing without any contemporary disagreement from any source, that Christianity was the largest non-governmental body ever seen. After an 18 year reign of peace towards Christians, Diocletian now views them as a threat after taking advice from an oracle at Didyma.

The following witch hunt was vast. Tortures were specific and ordered:

**The rack, the scourge, crucifixion, slow fires, hot irons to the eyes, Quartering and rendering, and flaying.
Don't google those terms if you are timid.**

Among the martyrs of this period:

Theodotus, who said on his way to prison:

"It is but just that Christians should suffer for Him who suffered for us all."

Timothy of Mauritania, who was blinded by hot irons and then his wife also right after him. Then both were crucified.

Procopius. Eusebius writes of him as follows:

"But he never ceased day nor night from the study of the word of God: and at the same time he was careful as to his manners and modesty of conduct, so that he edified by his meekness and piety all those of his own standing. And while his chief application was devoted to divine subjects, he was acquainted also in no slight degree with natural science. His family was from Baishan; and he ministered in the orders of the Church in three things: First, he had been a Reader; and in the second order he translated from Greek into Aramaic; and in the last, which is even more excellent than the preceding, he opposed the powers of the evil one, and devils trembled before him."

So Procopius goes to Caesarea and as he enters the city is arrested along with those in his company and brought to the Governor and the Judge Flavianus, said to him: 'It is necessary that thou shouldst sacrifice to the gods': but he replied with a loud voice, 'There is no God but one only, the Maker and Creator of all things.'

"And when the judge felt himself smitten by the blow of the martyr's words, he furnished himself with arms of another kind against the doctrine of truth, and, abandoning his former order, commanded him to sacrifice to the emperors, who were four in number; but the holy martyr of God laughed still more at this saying, and repeated the words of the greatest of poets of the Greeks [Homer], which he said that 'the rule of many is not good: let there be one ruler and one sovereign.'

"And on account of his answer, which was insulting to the emperors, he, though alive in his conduct, was delivered over to death, and forthwith the head of this blessed man was struck off, and an easy transit afforded him along the way to heaven. And this took place on the seventh day of the month Heziran, in the first year of the persecution in our days. This confessor was the first who was consummated in our city Caesarea."

Diocletian would purge the Army of Christians, and sentence them and other minority religions to torture or death.

Constantine would become the sole Emperor by 324AD.

Thanks to his Godly mother, (*Helena of Constantinople*), Christianity had become his favored religion. His mother was Augusta of the Roman Empire, and her full name was Flavia Julia Helena. She was a Nicene Christian. She was responsible for moving the remains of Matthias (who replaced Judas Iscariot), back to Rome for proper burial.

Pamphilus, our next hero. Born in the 200's AD, this is **Eusebius** mentor. All the histories Eusebius wrote, all the detail, the martyrs, the testimonies of the eye witnesses etc. the entire library, were collected and preserved by this man, Pamphilus. He was a minister in Caesarea, Palestine. He also ran a type of Bible College there and in order to provide a library he compiled the materials that the historian Eusebius would later be able to employ in writing his famous histories of Christianity.

When Pamphilus was beheaded for not making a sacrifice to idols, his student Eusebius, renamed himself "Eusebius of Pamphilus." Which brings us officially to the next hero of the church,,,

Eusebius of Pamphilus. Already quoted more than once in this study, the Greek son of a physician would sit in the Apostle Paul's chair as the head of the church in Rome for 4 short months. A pre-existing rift in the church regarding people who had recanted rather than be martyred caused such a fuss that the emperor Maxentius exiled him to Sicily where he soon died. His life's work however survives. The greatest work on early Christianity (the first 300 years) ever written. The Title?

ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY by EUSEBIUS PAMPHILUS IN TEN BOOKS.

Available for \$12. On Amazon.com.

Emperor Constantine the Great. (**Flavius Constantinus**) He was The 1st Roman Emperor to embrace Christianity and be baptized. He had a vision in the sky and started to brush it off, not knowing what to make of it, but his army also saw the vision. That night he had the same vision in a dream, with Christ coming to him to deliver the vision. He solidified the role of Christianity by legalizing its practice and fiscally supporting the church's charities and also many of its functions. Among those functions the Council of Arles in 314AD and the Council of Nicea in 325AD.

Eusebius, who knew him well, said Constantine was God's gift to His suffering church.

Below is **the Edict of Milan**, returning all seized property to both the churches and the private citizens who suffered their forfeit under previous Roman laws. It was a big deal. Here is the intro:

"When I, Constantine Augustus, as well as I Licinius Augustus did fortunately meet near Mediolanurn (Milan), and were considering everything that pertained to the public welfare and security, we thought-- among other things which we saw would be for the good of many--those regulations pertaining to the reverence of the Divinity ought certainly to be made first, so that we might grant to the Christians and others full authority to observe that religion which each preferred..."

Now that Christianity was a mainstream part of the National dialogue, the enemy of this world would have to destroy the church from within. And he tried hard. What was his tactic? The doctrine of the church regarding the Deity of Christ. Two men did more to fight the heresy than any other.

Augustine of Hippo, who wrote "The City of God", "On Christian Doctrine", and "Confessions" among others. All still in print 1700 years later. A capable witness he was responsible for winning The King of Kent (what is today South-East England), to Christ. The revival was so vast you could call all of England a Christian country.

Athanasius of Alexandria. Christian theologian and pastor who wrote the earliest defense of the Trinity known to exist outside of the Bible. He is the Father of Orthodox Christianity. His books include: "The life of Anthony" and "The Letter to Marcellinus", "Athanasius on the Incarnation", "Against the Heathen" (*you have to love that title*), and many others.

Jerome (born Eusebius Hieronymus Sophronius). The author of the 1st translation of the Bible into the language of the people, Latin. This would be the most read, quoted, and distributed Bible version for the next 1,000 years and more.

The next big threat to the church would be the war between Christianity vs. Islam.

The fight between Christianity and Militant Islam is 1400 years old and written in blood. A lot of it. It all started in at the center of the world for Christians and Jews, the ancient city of Jerusalem. In the year 636 Jerusalem fell to Muslim soldiers. Antioch, Damascus, Alexandria, and finally Carthage would all fall as well in rapid succession.

The damage to the world lasts to the present day.

Today a Mosque stands on the Temple Mount. Thousands of Muslims pray 5 times a day on this Mount, turning their backs to what should be the Temple, and pray to Mecca facing the east. In the mean-time Jews and Christians pray at the Wailing Wall, not allowed to pray on the temple Mount. This is a sight we should never get used to.



Jews and Christians praying at the Wailing Wall.



Muslims turning their backs to the Temple Mount praying to Mecca in the east.

The war between Christianity in the west and Islam in the east would continue through the 1400's when Constantinople fell to the Ottoman Turks, and into the 1500's when Muslim armies were knocking on the very gates of Vienna. This would finally come to a halt in 1683 as a result of the now exploding Christian Reformation. And even so our own founding fathers often fought the Muslim financed and supported **Barbary Pirates** when we were yet a fledgling nation.

It is the position of the R.U.S.H. Bible Study that if Christians had the Bible in their native languages, none of this would have happened. DH

The heroes of the Crusades would have to start with **Pope Urban II**. Byzantine **Emperor Alexius** sent a plea to the pope when Constantinople was sure to fall. The Pope didn't drop the ball. He mustered an army. A big one. Among the soldiers raising the army our next hero.

Bernard of Clairvaux. This quote is from him as he recruited and mustered the army:

"Our King [Jesus] is accused of treachery; it is said of him [by the Muslims] that he is not God, but that he falsely pretended to be something he was not. Any man among you who is his vassal ought to rise up to defend his Lord from the infamous accusation of treachery; he should go to the sure fight, where to win will be glorious and where to die will be gain."

By 1099 Jerusalem was retaken, but at a very high cost. This army was brutal. And many were not Christian. As the fight grew the Army was gaining members, among whom, just wanted to kill the Muslim scourge after centuries of Muslim atrocities. This army proceed to kill not only Muslim enemy combatants, but all Muslims and Jews, including women and children. They did free Jerusalem and turned the mosque into a church that would stand for over 100 years.

Peter the Hermit. The Crusader, Preacher Monk that led the fight for the liberation of Jerusalem. He was considered among the greatest preachers of that original 1st crusade. This battle for Jerusalem was key to everything that would follow because of all the land seized by Muslims, Jerusalem is the prize that hurts the most. Even still today. He personally recruited 40,000 soldiers, the majority poor working class believers. The following is a quote of his from Emperor Alexios' daughter who called him Peter the Cuckoo. Evidently she didn't see what the Muslim fuss was about from her palace in France.

'A divine voice,' he said, 'has commanded me to proclaim to all the counts in France that all should depart from their homes, set out to worship at the Holy Sepulchre, and with all their soul and might, strive to liberate Jerusalem from the hands of the Agarenes.'

Godfrey of Boullion, and his brothers Eustance and Baldwin.

Movie star good looks and a flair for the crowd, he played a major role in the siege on Jerusalem, capturing the city in a bloody massacre of all its inhabitants.

Godfrey was offered the crown of Jerusalem, but declined to call himself king. Within a month he secured the kingdom by defeating the Fatimids at Ascalon and ended the 1st crusade.

I love this guy's quote from when he was offered the crown:

"I will not wear a crown of gold in the city where Our Lord Jesus Christ wore a crown of thorns."

The 2nd crusade was set to regain the city of Damascus led by **Louis VII** of France partnered with **Conrad III** of Germany. This crusade failed and the world would wait for the next chance.

Richard the Lionheart. Richard I of England led his army during the 3rd crusade. Fighting against the mighty **Saladin** he was successful in recapturing the cities of Jaffe and Acre in the late 1100's. His contemporaries said of him, "He was the lord of warriors, the glory of kings, the delight of the world."

Richard the Lionheart's quotes:

*'We, however, place the love of God and His honour above our own
and above the acquisition of many regions.'*

Once Christianity and Islam stalemated so to speak, the quest on the Christian side of the aisle turned inward. That is difficult to do honestly if you can't read the Bible in your own language. Scholars had the Greek or Latin, but the laity? No such luck. The following list, (better discussed in "The R.U.S.H. Bible Study History of the Bible" handout), are the major players in getting the Bible translated into the common languages and made major advancements that would spark the Reformation and all subsequent revivals. Described briefly here so the student of scripture has a starting point for more detailed research.

These men are real heroes of the modern English speaking church. Some you will know, others less so.

Stephen Langton. 1227 divided the Bible into chapters. This revolutionized Bible study as so many had scripture from different hand written sources. His famous quote:

*Wash what is dirty, water what is dry, heal what is wounded. Bend what is stiff, warm what is cold,
guide what goes off the road.*

John Wycliffe. In the 1380's, the 1st ever Bible in English. Hand written. New Testament only. Here are some quotes from Wycliffe:

*The gospel alone is sufficient to rule the lives of Christians everywhere
any additional rules made to govern men's conduct
added nothing to the perfection already found in the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
Holy Scripture is the highest authority for every believer,
the standard of faith and the foundation for reform.*

The higher the hill, the stronger the wind: so the loftier the life, the stronger the enemy's temptations.

*Englishmen learn Christ's law best in English. Moses heard God's law in his own tongue;
so did Christ's apostles.*

John Hus. A student of Wycliffe's that continued his translating much of the Old Testament into English by hand. His most famous quote:

*"Seek the truth, listen to the truth, teach the truth,
love the truth, abide by the truth,
and defend the truth."*

Martin Luther. In 1521, 1st ever printed New Testament, in the German language, in defiance of the Church in Rome. He started the great reformation that still covers the globe. Some of his quotes.

"To be a Christian without prayer is no more possible than to be alive without breathing."

"You are not only responsible for what you say but also for what you do not say."

"Peace if possible; truth at all costs."

"We need to hear the Gospel every day because we forget it every day."

"Lord Jesus, You are my righteousness; I am Your sin. You took on You what was mine, yet set on me what was Yours. You became what You were not, that I might become what I was not."

William Tyndale. 1st ever printed English Bible, New Testament, 1525. My favorite Tyndale quote:

"The Church is the one institution that exists for those outside it."

Robert Stephanus Estienne. Divided the Bible into verses for the 1st time in 1555. Starting with the Geneva Bible on, all translations have used his verse divisions. He also was the most prolific printer of Bibles the world had ever seen up to that point. He was the Reformers printer in every language.

Johannes Gutenberg. The Christian inventor of the printing press. The 1st thing he printed? The Bible in 1455. Among his most famous quotes:

"Religious truth is captive in a small number of little manuscripts which guard the common treasures, instead of expanding them. Let us break the seal which binds these holy things; let us give wings to the truth that it may fly with the Word, no longer prepared at vast expense, but multitudes everlastingly by a machine which never wearies to every soul which enters life."

John Foxe. Published "Acts and Monuments", also known as "Foxes Book of Martyrs" in 1563. This Christian gentleman was born at the perfect time to set his destiny as a reformer, into action. He was born the year Erasmus published the New Testament in Greek, and the year before Martin Luther nailed his 95 thesis in Wittenberg in defiance of Catholic apostasy. Foxes book and the Bible were often taught together in Christian homes for decades. Some even wanted the book included in the Bible as a new Apocrypha.

John Foxe Quote:

*"Since it is the will of the Almighty that we should suffer for his name,
and be persecuted for the sake of his gospel, we patiently submit,
and are joyful upon the occasion;
though the flesh may rebel against the spirit, and hearken to the council of the old serpent,
yet the truths of the gospel shall prevent such advice from being taken,
and Christ shall bruise the serpent's head."*

The Great Revivals

Acts Chapter 2: c. 30-36 AD	The Day of Pentecost, the creation of the church starting with the baptism of the Holy Ghost. Major players were Peter and the disciples and shortly thereafter Paul and his disciples.
The Lollards: Mid 1300's	Led by Wycliffe and then by his student Jon Hus, and later, Savonarola. This was a call to reform Roman Catholicism that would last over 300 years and finally break through by the reformation sealed by Luther nailing his thesis to the door of his church.
The Protestant Reformation: 1517	Starting with Martin Luther nailing his Thesis in Germany, then John Calvin in France, Ulrich Zwingli in Sweden, and John Knox in Scotland. The seeds of the previous revival really caught fire by Guttenberg's printing press.
The 1 st Great Awakening: 1727-50	Nikolaus Ludwig count von Zinzendorf, <i>(that's a name for the books)</i> successfully sought to revive the now apathetic churches of the reformation in Germany. The same situation was brewing in England with brothers John and Charles Wesley which resulted in the Methodist movement in England and spilling over into America and elsewhere. John Whitefield also preaching great revival meetings all over Britain and in the American Colonies, the best of the American revival in the era of the Great Awakening was Jonathan Edwards. He is considered by most as the greatest orator of American puritanism.
The 2 nd Great Awakening: 1780-1840	This revival has had a profound effect on American churches to this day. The major focus of this revival was soul winning. Here is where the phenomenon of "camp-meetings" began. Starting with James McGready, John McGee, and Barton Stone. The focus was the altar-call. The next wave in this revival was a call to Holiness, coming from preachers such as Timothy Dwight, Nathaniel Taylor, Asahel Nettleton and Lyman Beecher. When Chuck Finney finally entered the scene, the 2 nd Great Awakening finally, and necessarily so, made the break from Calvinism to Arminianism and true freewill. Now distancing the church away from the pre-destination and other errant Calvinist doctrines.
The Layman's Revival: 1857-61	Also called The Layman's Prayer Revival. This revival held the same type of camp-meetings of the previous revival, but centered more on worship, and prayer. These meetings would often last for days, sometimes with little preaching, with the focus on Christian perfection. The main players were Phoebe Palmer, D.L. Moody, and Jeremiah Lanphier.

R.U.S.H. Bible Study
Read Understand Spread Harvest

The Pentecostal Revival: 1904-present day	This is the Revival that began the modern Pentecostal Revival foretold in scripture in Joel 2:23-29. Erupting globally with a renewal of the gifts of the Holy Spirit that had laid dormant for centuries. The names to research are, William J. Seymour at Azusa Street, Charles Parham his mentor, Eudorus N. Bell of The Assemblies of God along with J. Roswell Flower, Ivan Voronaev, and Cornelia Jones Robertson. Florence L. Crawford of The Apostolic Faith Movement, Aimee Semple McPherson of the Foursquare Church. Today this simple little revival boasts over 500,000,000 global believers. This is the greatest revival in recorded history.
The World War II Revival: 1935-50	Billy Graham in the U.S.A., Duncan Campbell in Europe (also called the Hebrides Revival or Lewis Awakening). The focus was, and still is, bringing people to the valley of decision. Then populating the local churches with those converts through follow up ministry.
The Baby Boomer revival: 1965-71	The Charismatic Movement, The Jesus People Movement with Chuck Smith, The Prairie Revival, The Independent Baptist Revival with Jerry Falwell, Elmer Towns, John R. Rice, and Asbury College Revivals.
Today:	I could not in clean conscious neglect to include <i>my</i> Heroes of the Church. Tommy and Marja Barnett, and Luke and Angel Barnett, Pastors of Dream City Church in Phoenix, Arizona and our Glendale Campus Pastors, Todd and Renee Matchett, The Church of:

The R.U.S.H. Bible Study. God Bless.



