**WHI6h-k Rome**

**Christianity**

A new religion was born and grew along with the Roman Empire: Christianity

Led by Jesus of Nazareth, believed to be the son of God by his followers, Christians.

Religion has roots in Judaism, as Jesus himself was Jewish

Christianity was monotheistic and conflicted with the official polytheistic God and Goddess system of the Roman Empire

**Beliefs, Traditions, and Customs of Christianity**

Christianity is monotheistic- there's only one god, the same god believed in by Jewish (Hebrew) people

Jesus is both the son of God and an incarnation of God

There is life after death for believers

The holy book for Christians is the New Testament, telling the story of Jesus, his teachings, and the life of early Christians

The beliefs of Christians were established early on by church councils

**The Spread of Christianity**

Christianity spread quickly through the Roman Empire because it had a popular message people liked

The early leaders of the church were Jesus' own original followers who inspired others

Some early leaders were martyrs, killed for their beliefs, inspiring others.

The religion spread across the empire the Apostles, including a man named Paul

**Impact of the Church**

Originally, Christianity was banned by the Roman Empire because it was monotheistic and conflicted with the polytheistic gods.

However, a later Roman emperor, named Constantine, converted to Christianity after having a spiritual encounter with Jesus

His becoming Christian made being Christian finally legal, and it eventually became Rome's official religion.

**The Church Changes Society**

As Christianity spread its influence on people's lives increased as well.

The Church became a source of moral authority- telling people what is right and wrong

Slowly, it became more important to be loyal to the Church than loyal to Rome and the emperor.

The Church became the main unifying force in Western Europe

**Roman Architecture**

The Pantheon

The Forum- Outdoor plaza in the center of Rome, home to government buildings and religious temples

The Coliseum- Model for modern stadiums, built in Rome, home to gladiator fights, chariot races, and war reenactments

**Roman Technology**

Roman Roads- Built much like roads today, allowed travel and trade across the empire

Roman Aqueducts- Large structures built to carry water from its source to towns

Roman Arches- Architectural feature that allows weights to be carried using less material

**Roman Science**

Ptolemy- Roman scientist living in Roman territory of Egypt. Studied geography and astronomy- believing in a geocentric universe

**Roman Medicine**

Rome made public health a priority, with medical schools, public water systems, and public baths (both supplied by aqueducts).

**Roman Language and Literature**

The Roman written and spoken language was Latin. Latin isn't used today, but is the basis of several modern languages:

* + Spanish
  + Portuguese
  + French
  + Italian
  + Romanian

Perhaps the most famous work of literature was a book called *The Aeneid*

Written by a man named Virgil, *The Aeneid* was fiction but attempted to connect the history of Rome to the history of Ancient Greece.

**Religion and Law**

Religion:

Rome eventually adopted Christianity as its official religion

Law:

The principle of "innocent until proven guilty" is found in the Twelve Tables

**The Fall of the Roman Empire**

There are several reasons for why the Roman Empire slowly declines

Geographic size: Difficulty to defend and administer the empire

Economy: Defense of Rome expensive, and the currency was devalued

Military: Army membership started to include non-Romans, resulting in decline of discipline

Moral decay: People’s loss of faith in Rome and the family

Political problems: Civil conflict and weak administration

Invasion: Attacks on borders

**How Rome Ends**

The Roman Empire was just too big for one man to run, so the solution to this problem was to cut the empire into two halves, the Western Roman Empire and the Eastern Roman Empire

The Emperor Constantine moved the capital from Rome to a city called Byzantium, which he renamed for himself, Constantinople in 330 A.D.

There are now two "Romes" The Western Roman Empire based out of Rome and the Eastern Roman Empire based in Constantinople, though the most powerful is the eastern.

**A Tale of Two Empires**

The Western Roman Empire continues to survive until 476 A.D. until the city is sacked by invaders.

The Eastern Roman Empire continues on as the Byzantine Empire, our next topic.