

FOUNDATIONS

HISTORY, HERITAGE, DOCTRINE



Week 5

The Imperial Church

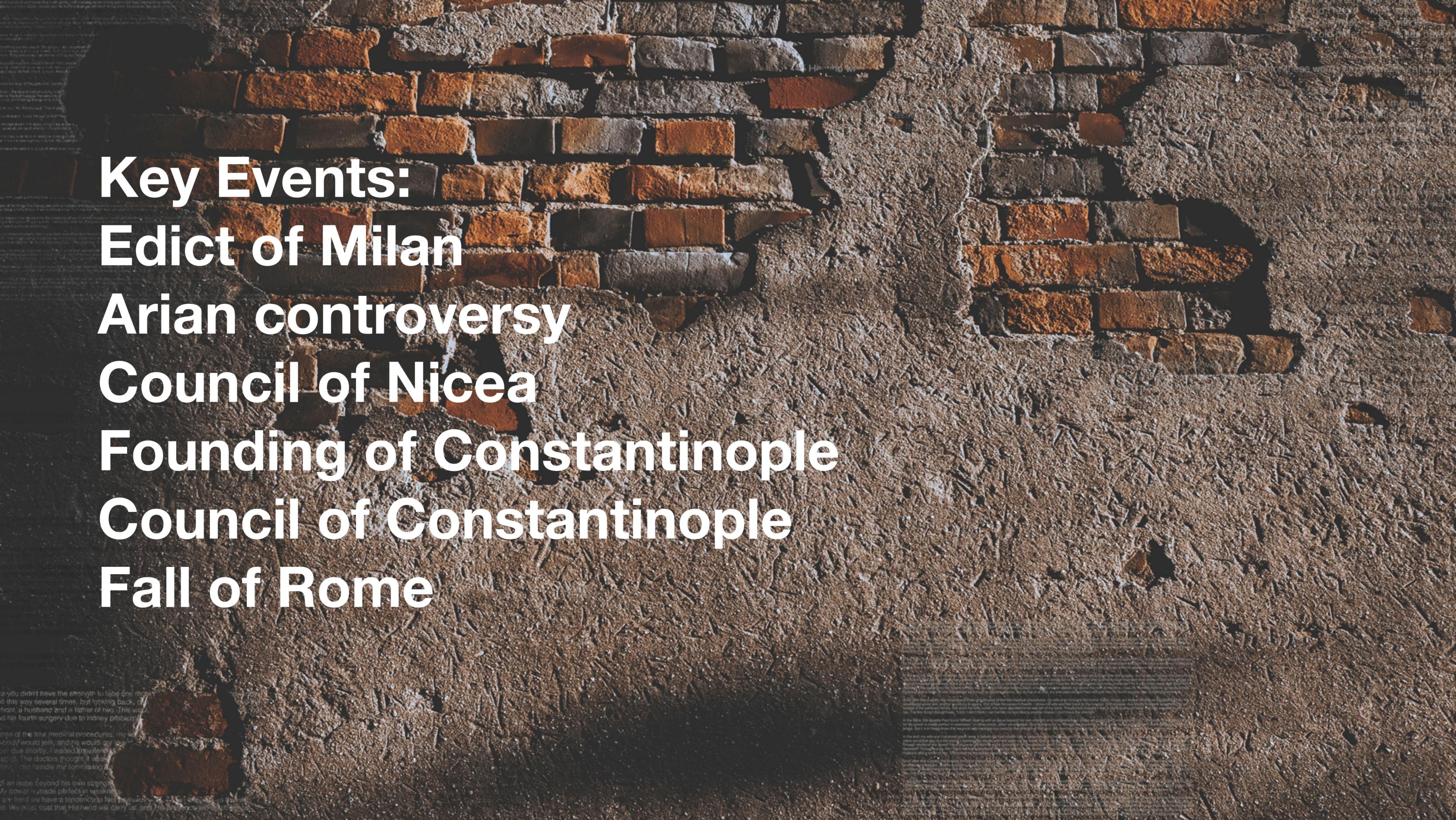
Foundations

306-450 AD

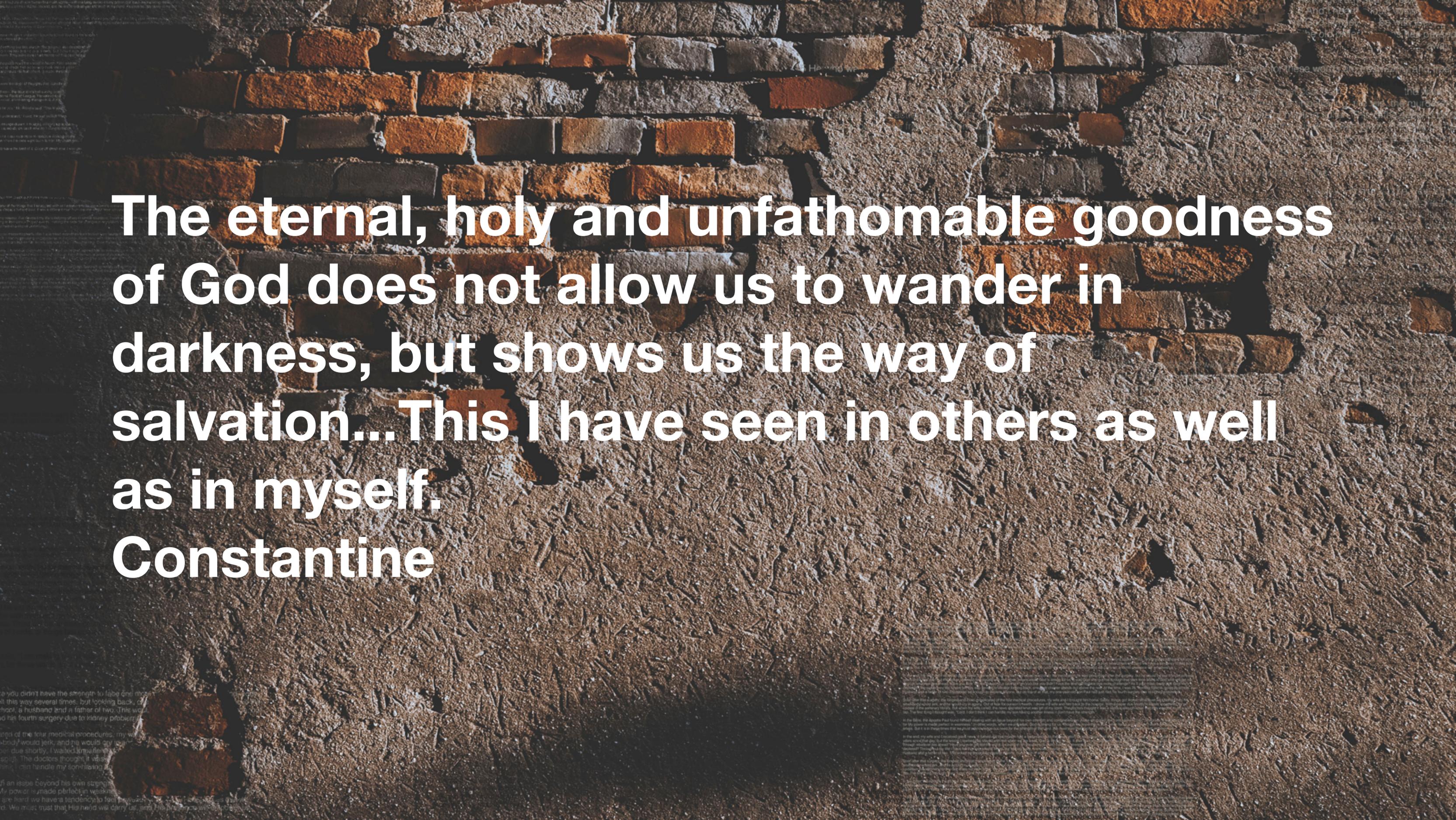
Emperors: Constantine--Theodosius II

Bishops: Sylvester-Zosimus

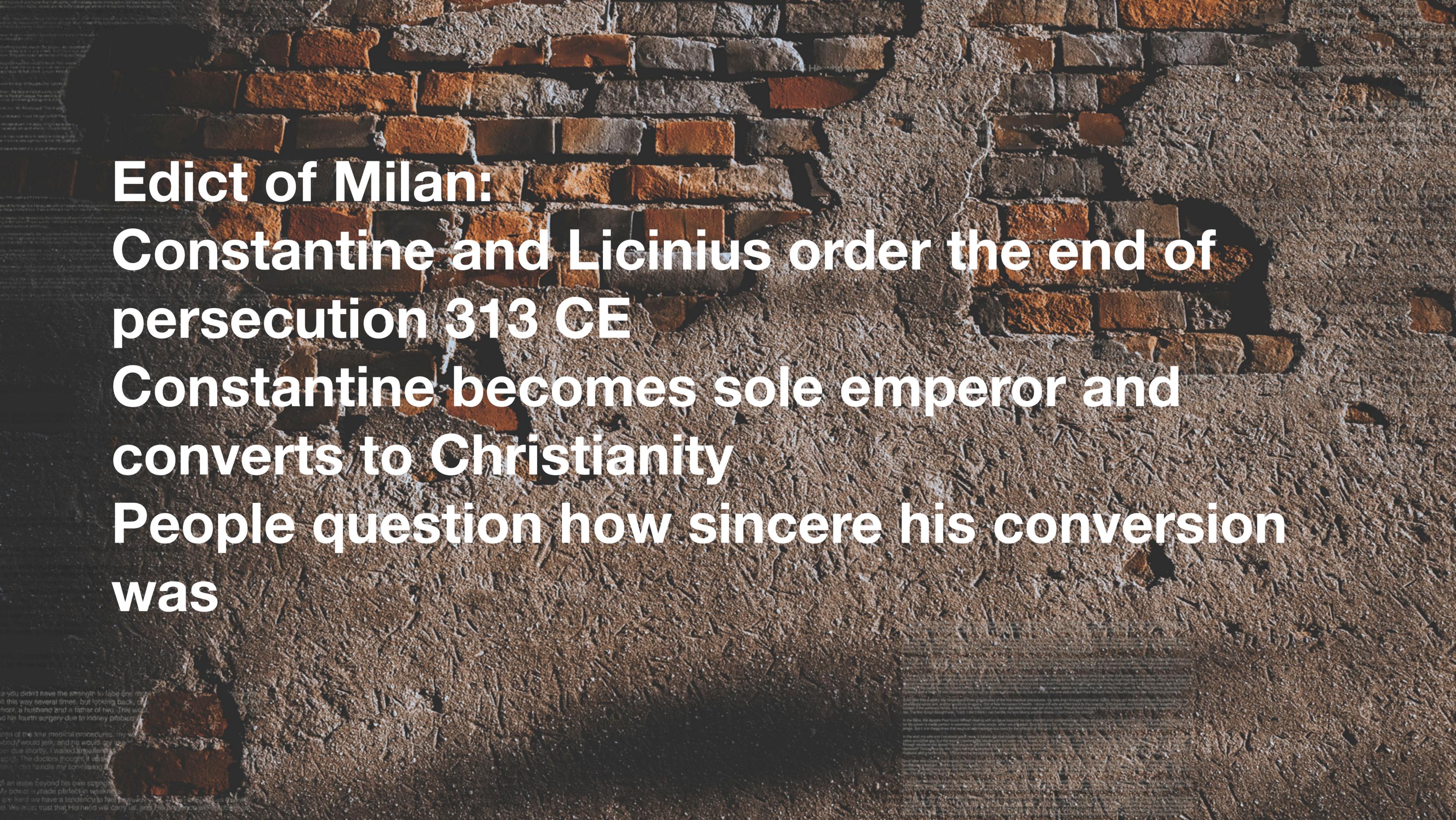
**Key People: Constantine, Maximus, Eugenius,
Anastasius, Jerome, Basil the Great, Eusibius**



Key Events:
Edict of Milan
Arian controversy
Council of Nicea
Founding of Constantinople
Council of Constantinople
Fall of Rome



**The eternal, holy and unfathomable goodness
of God does not allow us to wander in
darkness, but shows us the way of
salvation... This I have seen in others as well
as in myself.
Constantine**



**Edict of Milan:
Constantine and Licinius order the end of
persecution 313 CE
Constantine becomes sole emperor and
converts to Christianity
People question how sincere his conversion
was**

Regardless of sincerity, his conversion has impacted the history of the church even to today.

His religious policies have had an enormous impact on the course of Christianity

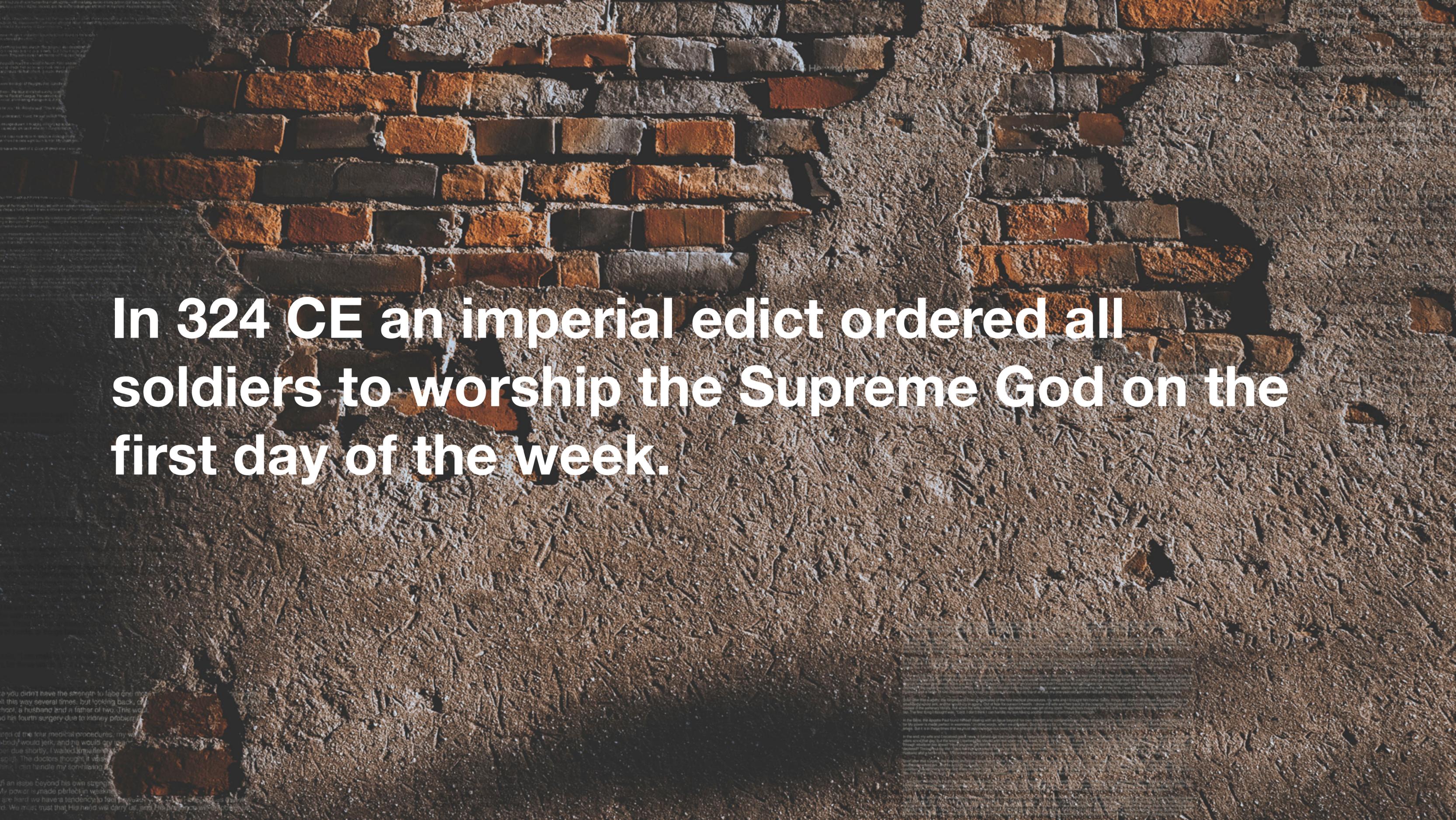
**Licinius ruled the eastern empire including
Egypt
Constantine ruled Italy, Western Europe and
the Western portion of North Africa
Licinius married Constantine's sister and had
a secret agreement
However both wanted to rule the whole
empire.**

322 CE Constantine invades Licinius' territories and the battle of Adrianople takes place. Constantine wins and Licinius flees to Byzantium

His wife Constance (Constantine's sister) and Bishop Eusebius went to Constantine asking to spare Licinius' life. Constantine agreed if she abdicated. She did and shortly thereafter, Licinius is murdered. Constantine gained the whole empire.

Constantine understood the power of Christ differently than those who had died for it.

He believed that God was a very powerful being who would support him as long as he favored the faithful. So when he put laws into place that favored Christianity and built churches, he did so for the goodwill of God not the Christians.



In 324 CE an imperial edict ordered all soldiers to worship the Supreme God on the first day of the week.

This was the day that Christians gathered to worship but also the day of the Unconquered Sun, so the pagans had no reason to oppose it.

While a christian, he still functioned as the High Priest of Paganism

Following his death, his Sons continued the rise of Christianity to where it became the dominant religion. Edicts and laws helped that but led to overzealous bishops using force against paganism.

Simplistic Christian worship began to take on imperial protocol.

Incense, Robes, "Priests", Always kneeling for prayer, Choirs, Great Church Buildings built (basilicas)

Theology:

**"Looking westward or eastward, looking over
teh whole earth, and even looking at heaven,
always and everywhere I see blessed
Constantine leading the same empire."
Eusebius of Casarea**

Eusebius of Casarea: probably the most learned christian of his time. Loved Constantine and his work.

Wrote with his teacher, Pamphilus, the Defense of Origen.

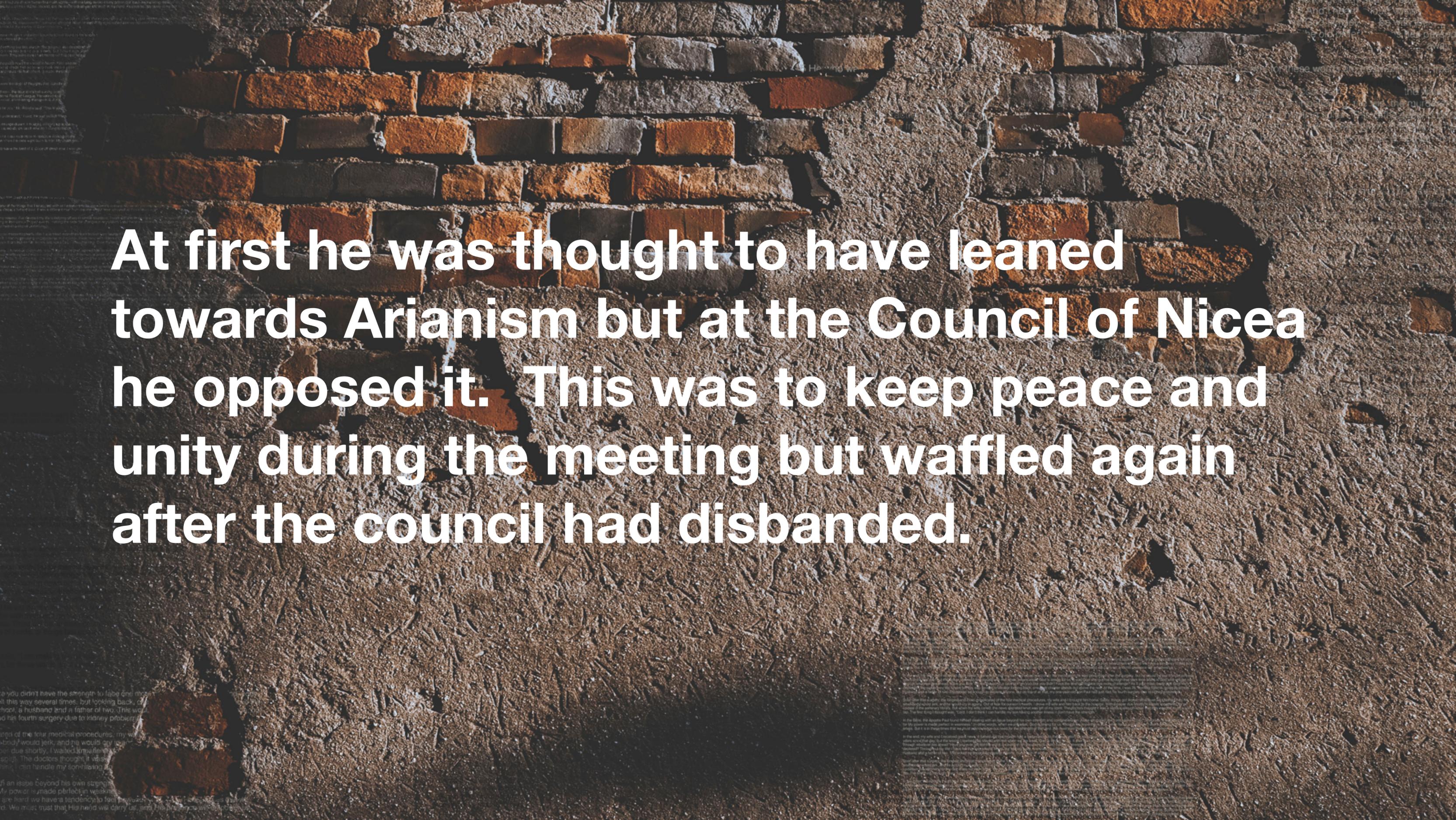
His most important work was, "Church History", where he collected, organized, and published practically everything known about the early church

Bishop of Caesarea

**Was over not only Caesarea but also the rest
of Palestine**

**Was bishop when the Arian controversy over
the divine status of Jesus arose.**

**Peace and Unity of the church was of prime
importance to Eusebius**



At first he was thought to have leaned towards Arianism but at the Council of Nicea he opposed it. This was to keep peace and unity during the meeting but waffled again after the council had disbanded.

He wrote that Christianity was the ultimate goal of human history, particularly in the context of the Roman Empire.

This was not a new concept, however he brought together prior ideas and showed them at work in the verifiable facts of the history of both the church and the Roman Empire

Constantine's conversion was crucial in this.

Eusebius said that the main reason for persecution was that the Roman authorities did not see that Christianity was the crowning touch on the best Roman traditions.

Constantine's religious policies was living and convincing proof of the truth of the gospel, to which all human history pointed.

Because of this theological perspective, he could not take a critical stance on current events of his time.

His work showed how Christian Theology was shaped by the new circumstances and abandoned its traditional themes.