

Stark presents data pertaining to the growth of Christianity after the crucifixion of Christ in Rome. He raises questions concerning Christianity which became the dominant religion in western civilization. When I looked at what Jesus brought to the earth, it was not a religion but the government of heaven. He came to restore what Adam lost (King Dominion over the earth). I surmise that the apostles were carrying out the "great commission" given by Jesus and that is why Christianity became dominant over the Roman pagan religious belief system. Stark talks about the percentage of Christians by the time Constantine was in Power (p.6). With Constantine conversion brought growth of "Christianity by the year of 300. I would say that once the disciples were martyred/killed by the roman government they incorporated "Catholicism" mixed with Christ teachings and increased Christianity. Where Starks contend that the rise of Christianity was not due to any miraculous rates of conversion, I beg to differ. I suggest the Gospel was being spread and it was the work of the Holy Spirit that convicted the hearts of any who believed. It appears that Historian of the early church Eusebius agrees, with me. He compared the rise of Christianity to evangelism, empowerment of the Holy Spirit and miracles. Starks studied several groups and found that people were conforming to a behavior. He viewed many groups as converts of a cult. However, Jesus warns us in scriptures about falling prey to false religions in Matthew 7:15 "Watch out for false

prophets. They come to you in sheep clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves.” Some groups were privilege classes, who were not necessarily religious and committed to the faith, as the lower classes/poor who were more religious in actually looking to God for upward mobility. Starks view Christianity as a cult.