

## TH 605 - 5-3-1 – Gonzalez, Ch 1

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### Questions:

1. What was the most immediate context of the earliest church?
2. What were the positive and negative impacts of the Roman empire upon the early church?
3. What impact did Plato and stoicism play in the early church?
4. In what roles did the Jews and Romans play in persecuting the early church?
5. What purpose did the apologist write?

### Answers:

1. Judaism with the first Palestinian Judaism and then the Jewish Diaspora.
2. The positive impact was that there was a peace that contributed to the expansion of Christianity. The negative effect was the syncretistic approach to religion that threatened the church with heresies and emperor worship, which became one of the reasons for persecution.
3. Christian doctrine of life after death was understood in terms of the Platonic doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the proclamation of the Reign of God reflected Platonic ideas. Stoicism was a philosophy that promoted high moral values, which influenced the development of Christian ethics.
4. In the book of Acts, the religious leaders of the Jews took the lead in persecuting the Christians, with the Romans intervening and stopping the persecution. But eventually, the Romans led the persecution of Christians.
5. Apologists wrote to deny the false rumors of Christian performing various acts of immorality and to show that Christianity was logical and capable of rational thought.

### Terms:

1. Hellenism: the combination of Greek culture by Alexander the Great and his followers with the ancient civilizations that had long existed in each land he conquered.
2. Jewish Diaspora: Jews who lived outside of Palestine, which includes Egypt, Asia Minor, Rome, Roman North Africa, and even the lands to the east that Babylon had earlier ruled.
3. Septuagint: Greek translation of the Old Testament by the Jewish Diaspora in Egypt

### Summary:

Christianity began as part of the Jewish tradition. They faced opposition from the Jews and, eventually, the Roman Empire. These produced martyrs who were witnesses with their blood and apologist who defended the faith with their writings. The early church also faced the heresies of Gnosticism and Marcion. The church responded by canonizing Scripture, formalizing the Apostles' Creed, and the doctrine of apostolic succession.