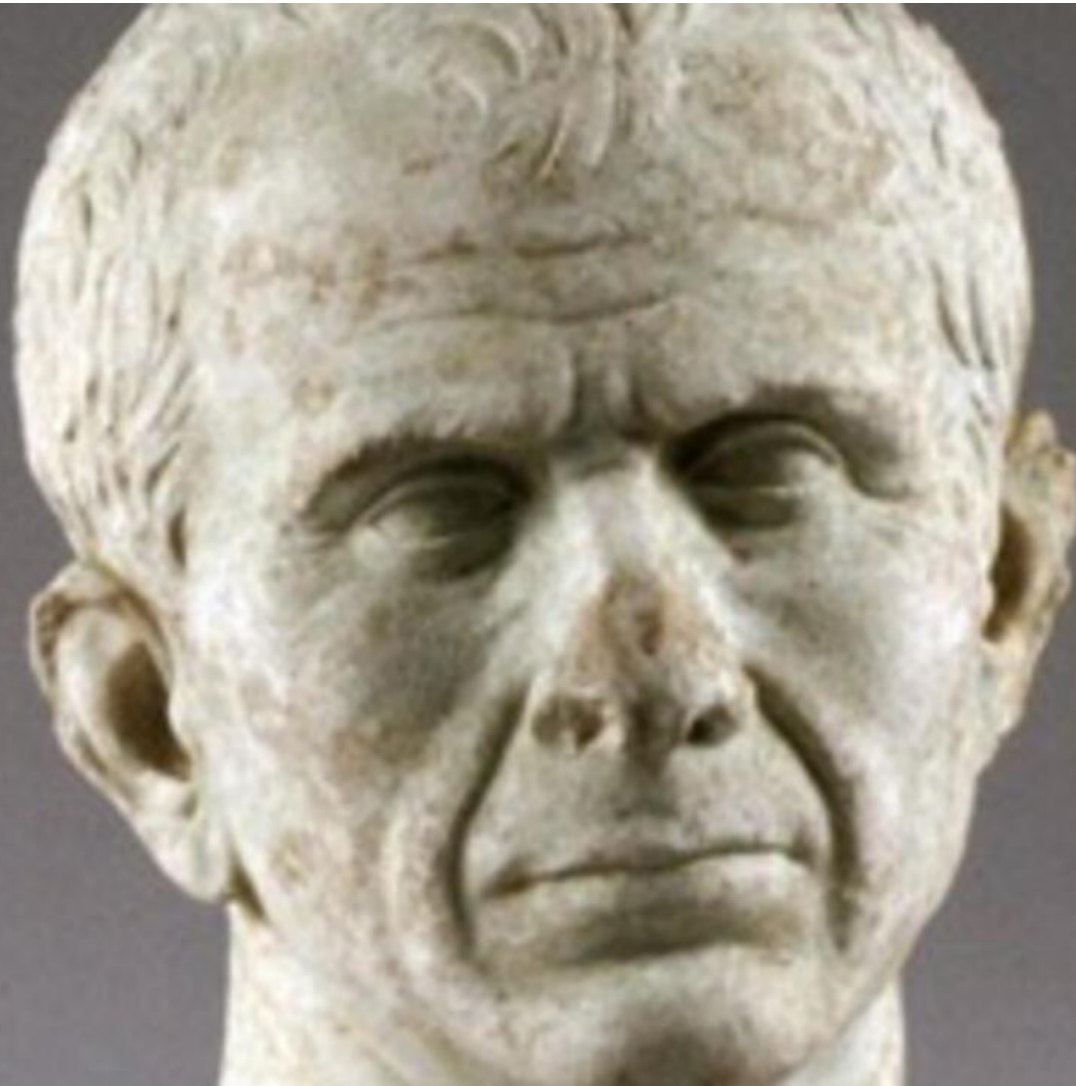




Clashing Kingdoms



Gaius Julius Caesar

(12 July 100 BC – 15 March 44 BC)



History of Advent

- Latin adventus - translation of Gk "Parousia" which means the coming or arrival, often of a great general or ruler returning from victory
- Originally had NOTHING to do with the birth of Jesus
- First associated (380 AD) with getting candidates prepared for baptism after 3 years of instruction and 40 days of fasting leading up to December 25
- By 600 AD, church adopted it as a time of fasting and prayer for everyone, BUT ...



But Check This Out

- The emphasis was primarily on praying for, looking forward to, and getting ready for the **SECOND COMING OF JESUS** when He will bring in His Kingdom on earth
- There was also a secondary emphasis on the coming of Christ into the believer's life
- Not until 1000 AD do we see any evidence on the birth of Jesus, primarily toward the end of the fast days
- Advent was about fasting/preparation for His return until well into the Middle Ages



Roman Imperial Cult

- Back to Julius Caesar, hugely successful and famous general who believed the Roman Republic should be ruled by an Emperor who gave orders to the Senate
- Also believed that emperors should be worshiped as divine beings, as gods
- He was assassinated for those ideas in 44BC, but by that time the idea kind of caught on, and his successor, Octavian, renamed Caesar Augustus, was regarded as divine and celebrated as Lord over all



Kingdom Collision Course

- 1 Peter 2:9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his own, so that you may proclaim the virtues of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 You once were not a people, but now you are God's people.
- Birthed into God's Kingdom, surrendered to His Power, for His Glory Forever!
- Once Christianity spread beyond Jerusalem, became obvious they weren't worshiping the Emperor



Seems Perfectly Clear

- 1 John 5:19 We know that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. 20 And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us insight to know him who is true, and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. This one is the true God and eternal life. **21 Little children, guard yourselves from idols.**
- Ummm, like maybe emperors proclaiming themselves to be God?



Them's Fightin' Words

- Philippians 2: 8 He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 **and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.**



Open Season on Christians

- As early as Emperor Nero (ruled from 54 AD to 68 AD) Christians became public enemy #1
- Accused, arrested and persecuted as seditionists and traitors to the Empire
- Nero is said to have made Christians scapegoats for some of Rome's problems, and threw them to the lions, used them as fuel for torches to light the streets, and just tortured them for fun.
- Set a pattern for persecution lasting 250 years



Looking Forward to Glory

- Colossians 3 Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Keep thinking about things above, not things on the earth, 3 for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 **When Christ (who is your life) appears, then you too will be revealed in glory with him.**
- **Foundation for Advent preparation was laid**



In the End, WE WIN

Revelation 11:15

Then the seventh angel sounded; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying,

“The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever.”



New Advent Theme?

- Hope, Peace, Joy, Love
- Purification
- “Little children, guard yourself from idols.”
- Not very holly jolly, but is Jesus Lord of our lives, or not? Are we focused on serving Him and putting our hope and trust in Him everyday, or do we secretly rely on another source for life and purpose? Are we looking forward with joy to seeing Him face to face, and reigning with Him? Are we preparing now for that glorious day?



Merry Christmas, YOU ARE

- deeply loved by God,
- fully accepted by God,
- completely and permanently forgiven by God,
- lavishly blessed by God,
- and eternally, perfectly embraced by God as his child; a child who brings Him unspeakable JOY
- **WHAT A WONDERFUL LIFE!!! \O/**