I have found over the years that lots of people have mistaken ideas about Constantine the Great, the early fourth century Roman Emperor who converted to Christianity. I used to have mistaken ideas myself, until I started reading the sources and examining the scholarship. For example, Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the empire, right? (Wrong.) Constantine is the reason Christianity took over the empire, right? (Wrong again). Constantine didn’t really convert to Christianity: it was a political move by a savvy politician who remained, at heart, a pagan, right? (Well, uh, sorry…)

It is true, though that the conversion of Emperor Constantine in 312 CE is one of Christianity’s pivotal events, and that by the end of the 4th century, Christianity was proclaimed the official religion throughout Rome, leading to the suppression of other religious traditions.

Here is a lecture I gave on Constantine and Christianity at the Smithsonian on Feb. 10, 2018. It is the last of the series of four that I have given here on the blog, based on my book The Triumph of Christianity.

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Why Did Ancient Christian Forgers Commit Forgery?
Why Did Christianity Take Over the World? Smithsonian Lecture 3.