

Key Roman Emperors from a Christian-History Perspective

Name	Years Reigned	Number of Years Reigned	Key Notes (Christianity and Major Activities)
Augustus	27 BC – AD 14	About 41 years	First Roman emperor; established Pax Romana, which aided later spread of Christianity; emperor during the birth of Jesus. Luke 2:1
Tiberius	AD 14 – 37	About 23 years	Emperor during the ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Luke 3:1; John 19
Nero	AD 54 – 68	About 14 years	Known for persecution of Christians after the Great Fire of Rome; traditionally associated with the martyrdoms of Peter and Paul. 2 Timothy 4:6–8, 16–17; 1 Peter 5:13
Domitian	AD 81 – 96	About 15 years	Associated with emperor worship and persecution; many connect his reign with the writing/background of Revelation. Revelation 1:9
Hadrian	AD 117 – 138	About 21 years	Consolidated the empire; built Hadrian's Wall (across northern Britain, AD 122; strongly influenced Judea after the Bar Kokhba revolt (130's) and rebuilt Jerusalem as Aelia Capitolina. Rome renamed Judea "Syria Palaestina."
Marcus Aurelius	AD 161 – 180	About 19 years	Stoic philosopher-emperor; wrote <i>Meditations</i> ; remembered for wisdom and leadership during military crises.
Diocletian	AD 284 – 305	About 21 years	Reorganized the empire and established the Tetrarchy; led the Great Persecution, one of the harshest persecutions of Christians.
Constantine the Great	AD 306 – 337	About 31 years	First Roman emperor to strongly support Christianity; issued the <i>Edict of Milan</i> (AD 313, making Christianity legal); associated with the (first) Council of Nicaea, AD 325.
Theodosius I (Theodosius the Great)	AD 379 – 395	About 16 years	Made Nicene Christianity the official religion of the Roman Empire (<i>Edict of Thessalonica</i> , AD 380). First Council of Constantinople, AD 381. Suppressed many pagan practices; last emperor to rule both eastern and western halves of the empire.