

advance their cause through it. At this point there comes a vital change because Constantine died in 337. So Constantine dying, naturally there would be vital changes in the empire. So we go on to D. The Reign of Constantius Now Constantius is not nearly as well known as Constantine but he was of tremendous importance in the history of the Christian church. It is utterly false to say that Constantine made Christianity a state religion. Constantine favored Christianity and did everything he could to help advance it. Constantius did much more that could be considered in the direction of making it a state religion than Constantine. Constantine gave his support to the Christian bishops and when a matter came up, he asked them to think it over and decide on the right course. Constantius proceeded on various matters to make his own decisions and endeavored to enforce them. He did not make Christianity the state religion either but went much further in that direction than Constantine. He acted more as if it were the state religion than Constantine did, and the fortunate thing for the Christian church is that the man who made Christianity more of a state religion was not a man who was trying to enforce pure Christianity but a man who was opposing pure Christianity. Therefore it purified and cleansed the church rather than to injure it. It only injured it temporarily so that it was a good thing for the church though a very disagreeable thing for the people at the time, that Constantius who used the power of the state to advance Christianity, ~~was~~^{was} using it to advance a false form rather than a true form and the true Christians were against these efforts rather than feeling that they were being benefited by it. Now that is a summary and we will look into the details of it. But first, a little bit about the political situation. The Sons of Constantine. Constantine did not have the wisdom of Diocletian in trying to plan how to continue the empire after his decease. Diocletian worked out a plan he hoped would continue in peace and harmony and a system that could be well admitted but his plan did not work. But Constantine, though a wonderful administrator himself and one who ruled the empire well as long as he lived, disposed of it almost as if it was personal property.