



## Future-proofing our children

### Confirmation 1

Lesson Title	The significance of the Roman emperor Constantine
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# A Parent's Guide

## Sunday School Home Schooling



## Dear Parent

Welcome to “**The significance of the Roman emperor Constantine**” Confirmation 1 lesson.

This document provides you with a minimum guide on how to present the lesson.

### How to prepare and present the lesson

Below are some tips on how to go about preparing and presenting the lesson:

Step	Action
1	Access the New Apostolic Church Website by keying-in or clicking on the following link from WhatsApp: <a href="https://bit.ly/3NACSSHS">https://bit.ly/3NACSSHS</a>
2	<p>Gather the following tools to ensure that you are ready for the lesson:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Bible</li><li>• The lesson in PDF format that is already prepared</li><li>• Child’s workbook and a pen, etc.</li><li>• The Video Clip which is an additional/ optional resource tool</li><li>• Catechism and Questions and Answers (especially for Confirmation)</li></ul> <p><b>Note:</b></p> <p>2.1: An ideal time preferably to present the lesson is after the Sunday morning service in line with the normal Sunday School time to maintain the routine.</p> <p>2.2: Please keep the lesson as concise (brief) as possible, bearing in mind the attention span (to focus on the lesson) of our children - you know your child best! <i>Sunday School normally does not exceed 45 minutes.</i></p> <p>2.3: The lesson is class specific (Confirmation 1).</p> <p>2.4: Please contact your Confirmation Teacher if you need any assistance or if you need any of the above resources.</p>
3	Pray (see the prayer at the end of this document) and ask God to use you as a tool to present the lesson the way He would want us to present it.



## Present a Confirmation Lesson at Home

### How to prepare and present the lesson

We continue to share some tips on how to go about preparing and presenting the lesson:

Step	Action
4	Create a pleasant, disturbance free learning environment where you and the child/ren are at the same level. <b>Example:</b> Sit around a table.
5	Read through the lesson. Re-read the lesson so that you understand it. Watch the video-clip of the lesson to get a better understanding of the lesson.
6	Make notes for yourself on important points that you would like to remember.
7	Understand the objective of the lesson that your child must remember.
8	Present the lesson to your child.
9	Show your child the video and recap on the meaning.
10	Refer your child to the activity in the child's workbook (I Also Want To.....)
11	Pray, or ask your child to pray and close the lesson.

### Available tools in terms of Home Schooling

Herewith some tools to enhance the quality of the lesson:

1. WhatsApp chat the lesson with another Confirmation 1 family.
2. Discuss the lesson with other parents to obtain clarity regarding the lesson before it is presented.
3. Feel free to conduct (do) your own research for additional (extra) information.



# The Lesson

<b>Lesson Title</b>	The significance of the Roman emperor Constantine
<b>Bible text</b>	No Bible text for this lesson
<b>Lesson Objective</b>	The children learn about the change in the position of the Roman emperors toward the Christian church.

## Lesson Summary:

- § The Roman emperors (rulers) had the power to determine the religion of their people.
- § Many laws concerning the practise of religion passed by the emperors were contrary to God's commandments.
- § Faithful Christians did not follow these laws.
- § Christians had to face discrimination, persecution, imprisonment, and even the death penalty.

**The emperor, Constantine, who ruled from 306 to 337, permitted the practice of Christianity. Many changes came about for Christians:**

- § Christians were no longer persecuted.
- § Crucifixion as the death penalty was abolished.
- § Christians were able to meet in public and conduct divine services.
- § Emperor Constantine ordered Sunday to be the common day of rest.
- § He encouraged the advancement of Christians into higher public office positions.
- § The bishops from the provincial capitals headed the clergy.
- § Constantine gave the bishops judicial powers. They were able to pass judgment and have it enforced.

**What happened when the emperor gave the bishops such power?**

- § The bishops were recognised and respected in society.
- § They had certain advantages compared with the rest of the population.
- § However, because they got special treatment, the bishops felt obligated to deal with church matters in a manner that was pleasing to the emperor.
- § The church was now heavily influenced by the emperor.



### **A split between an eastern and western church:**

- § The capital of the Roman Empire had always been Rome.
- § Emperor Constantine, however, shifted his seat of government to Byzantium.
- § He rebuilt it into a magnificent city and it was called Constantinople in his honour.
- § Today it is called Istanbul.
- § The bishops of Rome and Byzantium became the two of the most powerful people in the Roman empire.
- § The Bishop in Rome called himself “Pope” (derived from papa).
- § Over a period of centuries, the Pope in Rome and the Patriarch in Constantinople battled for supremacy among Christianity.
- § After many clashes, a split into an eastern and a western church came in the year 1054.
- § The eastern church called itself Orthodox Church (orthodox means holding the correct or conventional opinion).
- § The western church called itself Roman Catholic Church (Catholic means universal).

In conclusion, emperor Constantine allowed for Christianity to be practiced and the association of the state and the church brought about many good changes. Christianity grew, however, the church, became heavily influenced by the emperor. The Bishops who headed the church became very powerful. This created power struggles and in the end the church split into two major Christian churches namely the Orthodox church and the Roman Catholic church.

### **What does this lesson mean for us today?**

- The Roman emperors changed their position towards the Christian church.
- This had both a negative and a positive effect:
  - Ø Positive: Christians could practice their faith, they were no longer persecuted
  - Ø Negative: The emperor had a strong influence over the church. He gave the Bishops power who in turn dealt with church matters in a way that was pleasing to the emperor and not to God.
- This Christian church split into two major Christian churches: The Orthodox and The Roman Catholic church.



Do Exercises 1 and 2 with your child.

Answers to the Exercises:

**Exercise 1:**

During the first **three** centuries, after **Christ's birth**, the Christian faith was strange to many citizens of the **Roman Empire** and they were naturally **suspicious**.

The Christians did not want to worship the Gentile gods because they would have broken **the First Commandment**. Worshipping Gentile gods were stipulated by law.

That is why the Christians at that time were **persecuted**. Some Roman emperor's objective was to completely destroy the **Christians**. Nevertheless, at the end of the third century many people in the Roman Empire already professed **Christianity** and more were added all the time. Christianity had gained great **significance**. **Emperor Constantine** wanted to win over the large group of Christians for himself in order to **secure** his power and the unity of the empire. In the year 313, Christians were granted the **same rights** as the **Gentiles** by means of the Edict of Milan.

**Exercise 2**

Yes all of you be submissive to one another and be clothed with humility for God resist the proud but gives grace to the humble.

**A Prayer for Daddy and Mommy to pray before the lesson:**

*Dear God, thank you for this day,  
Bless all parents and children  
May we feel your presence,  
Bless the lesson we will have  
Please teach us how to serve you,  
And help us to do your will  
So that we grow closer to you,  
Send Jesus to fetch us  
And may we be ready to meet Him,  
Amen.*