When Constantine proclaimed Christianity to be the official religion of the Roman empire in AD 312, Christians were able to bring their religion to the surface in the wake of the dying Roman Empire. They had to then decide on a kind of a building to use for their churches. Christians again borrowed from the Romans and selected at their model the basilica, a long spacious building that the Romans had traditionally used for meeting halls. The outside of these churches was quite plain, especially when compared to classical Roman and Greek temples.

Emperor Constantine the Great, Roman, 4th c. Marble.