

# 2025 EXPLORING THE HISTORY AND ART OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY IN TURKEY, ATHENS, FLORENCE AND ROME



**Tour Hosts: Jared Ludlow & Kirk Richards • April 26 - May 10, 2025**

Come explore the history and art of early Christianity by following the footsteps of the apostle Paul across western Turkey, Athens, Corinth, and Rome with Jared Ludlow and Kirk Richards! We will visit some of the best-preserved Greek ruins in western Turkey from when the region was under Greek influence. As we conclude our journey in Rome, 2025 promises to be an especially remarkable time to visit due to the Jubilee Year. This rare event, held only every 25 years, is an extraordinary opportunity for pilgrims and visitors to experience the city at its spiritual and cultural peak.

Date	Daily Schedule
04/26 - Sat	USA - Istanbul, Turkey
04/27 - Sun	Istanbul, Turkey
04/28 - Mon	Istanbul - Topkapi Palace - Hippodrome - Blue Mosque - Hagia Sophia
04/29 - Tue	Istanbul - Basilica Cistern - Grand Bazaar -Bosphorus Cruise
04/30 - Wed	Izmir - Pergamon Acropolis - Asclepius - Red Basilica
05/01 - Thu	Sardis - Thyateria - Hieropolis - Pamukkale
05/02 - Fri	Laodecia - Priene - Miletus
05/03 - Sat	Ephesus - Basilica of John -Kusadasi
05/04 - Sun	Athens
05/05 - Mon	Corinth - Acropolis - Mars Hill - Agora
05/06 - Tue	Rome
05/07 - Wed	Rome - Colosseum - Basilica of Saint Clemente - Rome LDS Temple - Vatican City
05/08 - Thu	Florence - Uffizi Gallery - Accademia Gallery
05/09 - Fri	Rome - Sistine Chapel - St. Peter's Basilica
05/10 - Sat	Rome - USA

Price from **\$5,489**  
per person/double occupancy  
(15 Days/14 Nights)

**MORRIS MURDOCK**

**ESCORTED TOURS**

Book online at [www.mmetours.com](http://www.mmetours.com)

Call Morris Murdock Escorted Tours:

**(800) 809-9910**

or Morris Columbus Travel:

**(800) 999-4646**

Scan the  
QR code for a  
full detailed  
itinerary!



Tour ID #9225D26, Tour Manager: Kim Meyer, phone#: (801) 483-6315, email: [kmeyer@morrismurdock.com](mailto:kmeyer@morrismurdock.com)

### Your Tour Hosts:



**Jared Ludlow** is a Professor of ancient scripture and ancient Near Eastern studies at Brigham Young University where he has taught since 2006. Previously, he spent six years teaching religion and history at BYU-Hawaii. He has also taught two years at the BYU Jerusalem Center for Near Eastern Studies. He loves sports, snorkeling, and traveling around the world. **Kirk Richard** is a contemporary artist whose work engages with themes of antiquity, religion, spirituality, equality, and love. His work asks questions about modern application and implementation of religion as it relates to historical narratives and mythologies. The work often prioritizes the poetry of religious text over dogma or historical accuracy. Stylistically it often bridges or walks a tightrope between classical and abstract expression. He and his wife Amy Tolk Richards have four children.

### Tour Includes:

- Deluxe motor coach transportation
- Local guides
- Accommodations in moderate-class hotels
- Sightseeing tours as outlined on the itinerary
- Entrance fees
- Basic gratuities for hotels, restaurants, local guides, and bus drivers in Turkey.
- Meals as indicated on the itinerary during the land portion (breakfast and dinner at our hotels)
- Flight from Turkey to Greece
- Flight from Greece to Rome
- Arrival transfer from Rome airport.
- 4 nights in Rome, HOTEL MEDITERRANEO, central 4-star hotel.
- Buffet Breakfast, In/Out portorage and City tax.
- 4 Dinners at Hotel. Italian three courses meal (no buffet), water included.
- Full time Tour Escort.
- Guided tour of St. Paul's and St. John's Basilicas.
- Guided tour of Colosseum and St. Clemente Church including return transfers and admissions.
- Return transfers to the Rome LDS Temple.
- High-speed train tickets to/from Florence.
- Guided tour of Florence including the Academy of Fine Arts. Admissions included.
- Guided tour of the Uffizi Gallery including admissions.
- Guided tour of the Vatican including return transfers and admissions.
- Admissions to the Borghese Gallery include return transfers.
- All guided tours include Whispers.
- Departure transfer to Rome airport.

### Not included:

- Round-trip airfare from Salt Lake City to Istanbul home from FCO (Rome) to Salt Lake City @\$TBA
- Additional possible airfare from cities other than Salt Lake City
- Sightseeing not included on the itinerary
- Additional hotel accommodations
- Items of a personal nature (i.e., phone calls, room service, emails, etc.)
- Additional travel insurance and cancellation waiver
- Basic gratuities for hotels, restaurants, local guides, and bus drivers in Rome.
- Most lunches
- PRICING FOR THE HANDS-ON ART EXPERIENCE: Kirk will assemble art packets for those interested in guided art projects during the tour. The cost is \$75 per packet. Packet dimensions are 2.5x13x10 inches.

### Deposit and payment details:

- \$500 deposit per person due at booking
- \$125 cash discount offered per person. Payment must be made by check or CASH (This applies to all payments AFTER initial \$500 deposit)
- Single supplement: \$6,589.00

### **Day 1: Saturday, April 26, 2025**

*USA - Istanbul, Turkey*

We'll depart from our homes in the USA on Saturday 26th, arriving in Istanbul, Turkey the following morning Sunday April 27th.

**Meals: In-flight**

### **Day 2: Sunday, April 27, 2025**

*Istanbul, Turkey*

Istanbul is a city much like Rome, sitting atop seven hills. Originally established by the Greeks in the eighth century BC, it was then known as Byzantium. In AD 330, Emperor Constantine of Rome designated it as his capital, renaming it Constantinople. For a millennium thereafter, Constantinople served as the capital of the Byzantine Empire until 1453, when it fell to the Ottoman Turks. They renamed the city Istanbul. We check into our hotel and dinner awaits us tonight in this historic city.

**Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

### **Day 3: Monday, April 28, 2025**

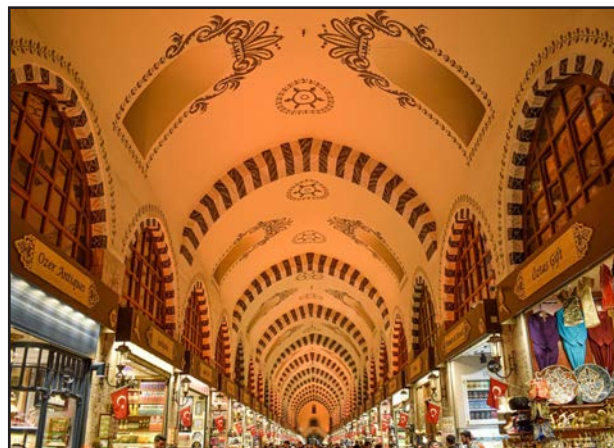
*Istanbul - Topkapi Palace - Hippodrome - Blue Mosque - Hagia Sophia*

Today we will embark on a captivating city tour of Istanbul, beginning with a visit to the magnificent Topkapi Palace. This historic palace was once the residence of Ottoman sultans and showcases stunning architecture and lavish interiors. Next, we will marvel at the architectural splendor of the Hagia Sophia, a masterpiece constructed by Emperor Justinian in AD 527. Adjacent to it stands the Blue Mosque, a breathtaking example of Islamic architecture commissioned by Sultan Ahmet I. We will enjoy some free time and then we'll be escorted to our hotel for a relaxing dinner and overnight stay in Istanbul. **Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

### **Day 4: Tuesday, April 29, 2025**

*Istanbul - Basilica Cistern - Grand Bazaar -Bosphorus Cruise*

After breakfast we enjoy a day filled with excitement and exploration in Istanbul. Our first stop will be the mesmerizing Basilica Cistern, where we'll descend into the depths of history and marvel at the ancient underground reservoir adorned with magnificent columns and mystical atmosphere. Afterward, we'll dive into the vibrant ambiance of the Grand Bazaar, immersing ourselves in its labyrinthine alleys filled with colorful stalls offering everything from spices and textiles to jewelry and ceramics. Bargaining and browsing, we'll soak in the bustling energy of this iconic marketplace. Next we embark on a scenic Bosphorus Cruise, gliding along the picturesque strait that divides Europe and Asia. As we sail past historic landmarks and charming waterfront neighborhoods, we'll witness the enchanting beauty of Istanbul from a unique perspective. After a day of unforgettable experiences, we'll have dinner, savoring the flavors of Turkish cuisine. We will overnight again in Istanbul. **Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**



### Day 5: Wednesday, April 30, 2025

*Izmir - Pergamon Acropolis - Asclepius - Red Basilica*

We'll start our morning with a transfer to Istanbul airport for our flight to Izmir. Landing in Izmir, our journey continues with a scenic drive to the ancient city of Pergamon. En route, we'll soak in the picturesque landscapes of the Turkish countryside. Our first stop in Pergamon will be the legendary Acropolis, where history comes alive amidst the remnants of ancient temples, theaters, and libraries. We'll wander through the ruins, imagining the grandeur of this once-mighty city. Next, we'll visit the sacred Asclepius, a sanctuary dedicated to the Greek god of healing. We visit the striking Red Basilica, a monumental structure that stands as a testament to Pergamon's architectural prowess. Amidst its crimson walls, we'll uncover tales of bygone eras and marvel at the craftsmanship of antiquity. Tonight we'll have dinner and retire in our hotel in Pergamon. **Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**



### Day 6: Thursday, May 1, 2025

*Sardis - Thyateria - Hieropolis - Pamukkale*

This day begins with a scenic drive to Sardis, passing through the charming ancient city of Thyatira along the way. Upon arriving in Sardis we explore the remnants of this once-thriving city. Next we visit Pamukkale, passing by Philadelphia. Arriving in Pamukkale, we'll be greeted by the awe-inspiring sight of Hierapolis, an ancient city famed for its mesmerizing travertine terraces and rejuvenating hot springs. We'll traverse this UNESCO World Heritage Site, marveling at the natural wonders that adorn its landscape. Tonight we have dinner and retire to our hotel in Pamukkale. **Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**



### Day 7: Friday, May 2, 2025

*Laodicea - Priene - Miletus*

We'll kick off the day with a morning visit to Laodicea, where ancient ruins and fascinating history await us. After soaking up the history of Laodicea, our journey continues as we take a scenic drive to the ancient cities of Priene and Miletus. These archaeological sites are steeped in history with well-preserved ruins waiting to be discovered. We'll make our way to Kusadasi, where dinner awaits us after checking into our hotel in Kusadasi.

**Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

### Day 8: Saturday, May 3, 2025

*Ephesus - Basilica of John - Kusadasi*

After breakfast we will set off with a visit to the ancient city of Ephesus, one of the best-preserved ancient cities in the world. As we wander through its majestic ruins we'll be awed by the grandeur of structures like the Library of Celsus and the Great Theater, which once hosted performances for thousands of spectators. Fun fact: Ephesus was once home to one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World, the Temple of Artemis. Next, we'll explore the



Basilica of St. John, a sacred site believed to be the final resting place of the apostle John. We'll learn about its significance in early Christianity and its role as a pilgrimage site throughout the ages. We will have dinner and over night at our hotel in Kusdasi.

**Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

### **Day 9: Sunday, May 4, 2025**

*Athens*

Today the morning is free time for you to explore and soak up the vibrant atmosphere of Kusdasi. In the afternoon we transfer to the airport for our flight to Athens. Did you know that Athens, the capital of Greece, is one of the oldest cities in the world, with a recorded history spanning over 3,400 years. As we arrive in Athens and transfer to our hotel, we'll be greeted by the rich cultural heritage and ancient landmarks that define this historic city. After settling into our hotel, we'll gather for a dinner, savoring the flavors of Greek cuisine while enjoying the company of fellow travelers. **Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

### **Day 10: Monday, May 5, 2025**

*Corinth - Acropolis - Mars Hill - Agora*

We'll start our adventure with a morning drive to Corinth, an ancient city with a rich history dating back thousands of years. Corinth was not only a powerful city-state in ancient Greece but also played a significant role in early Christianity. It's also famous for its innovative engineering, including the construction of the Corinth Canal, which connects the Gulf of Corinth with the Saronic Gulf. After immersing ourselves in the wonders of Corinth, we'll return to Athens. Our first stop will be the iconic Acropolis, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a symbol of ancient Greek civilization. Fun fact: The Parthenon, the most famous structure on the Acropolis, was built in the 5th century BC as a temple dedicated to the goddess Athena, the patron deity of Athens. Next, we'll ascend Mars Hill for stunning panoramic views of ancient Athens. Our final stop of the day will be the bustling Agora, the ancient marketplace and civic center of Athens. Here, we'll wander among the ruins of temples, stoas, and government buildings, gaining insight into the daily life of ancient Athenians. Tonight we will have dinner and relax at our hotel in Athens. **Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

### **Day 11: Tuesday, May 6, 2025**

*Rome*

We will start our day with a flight to Rome. Our arrival is in the morning. We transfer to the city center to visit St. Paul's Outside the Walls, one of Rome's four major basilicas dedicated to the apostle St. Paul. This basilica is renowned for its stunning 5th-century mosaics that depict scenes from the life of St. Paul and other biblical figures.

Next, we will visit St. John Lateran Basilica, the oldest and high-



est-ranking of the four major basilicas in Rome. It is the cathedral of the Bishop of Rome, the Pope, and is considered the "Mother of all Churches." One of its unique features is the Scala Sancta, or Holy Stairs, which are believed to be the steps that Jesus Christ climbed on his way to trial before Pontius Pilate. Another highlight is the beautiful 13th-century cloister, which is known for its elegant, twisted columns and peaceful atmosphere. Hotel dinner and overnight in Rome. **Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**



### Day 12: Wednesday, May 7, 2025

*Rome - Colosseum - Basilica of Saint Clemente - Rome LDS Temple - Vatican City*

This morning we visit One of the most iconic symbols of ancient Rome, the Colosseum. It was used for a variety of events, including gladiatorial contests, animal hunts, mock sea battles, and even executions. Next we visit The Basilica of Saint Clemente. The present basilica was built in the 12th century, but beneath it lies a 4th-century basilica, and even further down, a 1st-century Roman house with a Mithraic temple. After lunch in the afternoon we enjoy The Rome Italy Temple, located just a few kilometers northeast of the Vatican City, it is the first temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Italy and the 13th in Europe. For those who would like to book a session you are welcome to. Then on to dinner and relaxing at our hotel. **Meals:**



**Breakfast, Dinner**

### Day 13: Thursday, May 8, 2025

*Florence - Uffizi Gallery - Accademia Gallery*

We take a early morning high-speed train to Florence 1.5 hour train journey. We explore Florence starting with a morning guided tour of Florence including the Academy of Fine Arts. The guided tour will include an exterior visit to the Duomo monumental complex. This afternoon a guided tour of the Uffizi Gallery one of the oldest and most famous art museums in the world. Visitors can admire masterpieces by renowned artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Botticelli, and Raphael among others. We take a Late afternoon, high-speed train to back to Rome. (a 1.5 hour ride) Dinner and overnight at the Rome hotel.



**Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

### Day 14: Friday, May 9, 2025

*Rome - Sistine Chapel - St. Peter's Basilica*

This day begins with a visit to the Vatican Museums. The museums contain over 70,000 works of art, including masterpieces by artists such as Leonardo da Vinci, Raphael, Caravaggio, and Michelangelo. Next, we visit the Sistine Chapel located within the Vatican Museums famous for its breathtaking ceiling painted by Michelangelo. The ceiling depicts scenes from the Book of Genesis, including the iconic "Creation of Adam" where the



hands of God and Adam nearly touch. After exploring the Vatican Museums, we will visit St. Peter's Basilica one of the largest churches in the world and one of the holiest sites in Christianity. The basilica stands on the traditional burial site of St. Peter, one of the twelve apostles of Jesus, making it a place of immense religious significance worldwide. For those who would like we have an optional Afternoon visit of the Borghese Gallery. This is on an individual basis including admissions, no group tour with guide. Tonight, we have dinner at our hotel in Rome.

**Meals: Breakfast, Dinner**

**Day 15: Saturday, May 10, 2025**

*Rome - USA*

Today, we will take our flights home to the US, carrying with us lifelong memories. Having been deeply touched by the rich history and mesmerizing artistry woven into the cities and sacred sites we had the privilege to explore

**COVID-19 WAIVER and TERMS:** By signing up for any tour I am agreeing to abide by all COVID-19 protocols while on tour as defined by the host country or business, which may include being fully vaccinated with booster, wearing a mask and producing proof of vaccination or negative test for COVID-19 prior to arrival. I understand that if I and/or my party does not follow all set protocols, it is grounds for removal from tour or specific tour activities.

**INTERNATIONAL TRIPS:** For all tours and cruises that include international air, a valid passport is required and must be valid for at least 6 months from the return date of the trip. Morris Murdock Escorted Tours must receive a copy of your passport information page by final payment date. Airlines have strict policies concerning name changes/corrections after tickets have been issued. If a name change/correction is required on your ticket, you will be required to cover the cost of any fees.

**TERMS AND CONDITIONS:** Morris Columbus/Morris Murdock Escorted Tours, ("Agent") gives notice that all services, reservations and arrangements for transportation, cruise, conveyance, hotel or lodging of any type, meals, sightseeing services, or any other activities made by Agent, are made by Agent as dual agent for the traveler/passenger and for the air carriers, hotels, sightseeing companies, transportation companies, cruise lines, and other companies (Suppliers) providing services for this program. As such, Agent shall not be liable for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity which may be occasioned either by reasons of defect in any vehicle or mode of transportation, through the acts, defaults, financial difficulty, bankruptcy, or omissions of the Supplier or person engaged in carrying out the arrangements of the trip or otherwise in connection therewith. Agent is not liable for delays and/or cancellations of services and resultant expenses or loss caused by acts of God, weather, disaster, government regulations, sickness or death, quarantine, strikes, war, terrorism, social or labor unrest, local laws, mechanical or construction difficulties, curtailment or disruption of transportation, abnormal conditions or other situations, actions, omissions or conditions outside Agent's control. Agent is not liable for loss of, or damage to, baggage or personal possessions. Agent and Supplier reserve the right to alter or cancel the itinerary or substitute services as conditions require or for the safety of traveler/passenger. Passengers must be in good health and able to care for their own needs. Please contact us regarding any health concerns you may have or if you need to bring any specialized medical equipment such as wheelchairs, oxygen tanks, C-Pap, etc. so that we can determine if Supplier can accommodate your equipment. Tour directors on the trip cannot be of assistance with such needs. We reserve the right to remove travelers/passengers from the group at their own expense if the care of or actions of a traveler/passenger become detrimental to the functioning of the tour. Payment of deposit(s) as outlined in this agreement shall be deemed consent to be bound by the terms and conditions of this agreement. Airline schedule changes, mechanical or weather delays may affect flight times. Your connecting flights and/or transportation to and from the tour start and end point, whether issued by Morris Columbus Travel/Morris Murdock Escorted Tours or on your own arrangement, may be affected. Morris Columbus Travel/Morris Murdock Escorted Tours is not responsible for misconnections, delays, and/or cancellations.

**MORRIS MURDOCK**  
—◆—  
**ESCORTED TOURS**  
Book online at [www.mmetours.com](http://www.mmetours.com)

Call Morris Murdock Escorted Tours:  
**(800) 809-9910**  
or Morris Columbus Travel:  
**(800) 999-4646**