

Book I.
Title VIII.

That no one shall be permitted to engrave in or paint the sign of the Savior Christ on
stone or marble.

(Nemini licere signum slavatoris Christi vel in silice vel in marmore aut sculpere aut
pingere.)

1.8.1. Emperors Theodosius and Valentian to Eudaxius, Praetorian Prefect.

Since we exercise great care to guard in every manner the religion of the supernal power, we order that no one shall engrave or paint the sign of the Savior Christ either on the earth or on stone or marble placed in the ground, but whenever such is found, it shall be destroyed; and we specially command that if anyone attempts a violation of our law, he shall be punished by the severest penalty.

Given May 21 (427).

Note.

It was still reckoned a heathen practice to represent objects of worship by pictures. Gieseler, 1 Ecclesiastical History 427. Images of the Savior bound to the cross were first introduced about the end of the 6th century. Kurtz, Church History § 60. The instant law seems to have intended, at least partially, to prevent the cross being trampled on by feet, since not all signs of the cross were hereby forbidden.