

The Early Church
Week 5

1

A.I.M.
Author's Intended Meaning

2

CONTEXT
Verse within chapter
 within book
 within author's works

3

Notes on Acts

- Written by Luke, as a sequel to his Gospel, probably around 63 A.D.
- Written to Theophilus
- Luke was a firsthand witness for some of the events
- Begins with the Apostles, then shifts to Paul

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Pre-Pentecost

- Jesus is said to have appeared "to them over a period of 40 days and speaking of the things concerning the kingdom of God" (1:3)
- Jesus tells them to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit (1:8)
- He ascends to Heaven, and the Apostles replace Judas

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Pentecost

- A noise comes like a "violent rushing wind" (2:2)
- The Apostles began to speak in different tongues (many people present)
- Peter gives a lengthy sermon
- 3,000 people are baptized

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Pentecost

- Question: "What shall we do?"
- Answer: "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

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Acts 2: The Early Church

- They were continually devoting themselves to the Apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone kept feeling a sense of awe and many wonders and signs were taking place through the Apostles.

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Acts 2: The Early Church

- And all those who had believed were together and had all things in common; and they began selling their property and possessions and were sharing them with all, as anyone might have need.

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Acts 2: The Early Church

- Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart...

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Acts 2: The Early Church

- ...praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.

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Tough topic:
Judaism

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Chapters 3 & 4

- Peter and John and the lame beggar
- They are arrested and appear before Annas, Caiaphas, and the priests
- The news of the healing had spread and so the men are released
- Barnabas is first mentioned (4:36-37)

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Chapter 5

- Ananias and Sapphira cheat the church
- Many people were being healed
- The Apostles wind up in jail again
- An angel frees them
- The men are returned and Gamaliel advises letting them go

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Chapters 6 & 7

- The first deacons are appointed
- Stephen is teaching and gets arrested. He gives a lengthy defense
- Stephen is then stoned and a young man named Saul holds the coats

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Chapter 8

- Saul begins persecuting the church
- The church begins to be persecuted in Jerusalem and the believers scatter (this was a good thing)
- Philip witnesses to the Ethiopian Eunuch (who is baptized)

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Chapter 9

- Saul is converted on the road to Damascus
- He preaches in Damascus and Barnabas helps him in Jerusalem

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Chapter 10

- Cornelius is told to send for Peter
- Peter has a vision about unclean food
- Peter is brought to preach to the Gentiles
- The Gentiles are saved (and baptized)

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Chapter 11

- Peter reports to Jerusalem
- The Jews are unhappy at first, but Peter convinces them

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Chapter 12

- James (son of Zebedee) is put to death by Herod
- Herod dies

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Chapter 13

- First missionary journey came to be "while they were ministering to the Lord and fasting" (13:2)
- John Mark goes home

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Chapter 14

- In Lystra, Paul heals a man and the people think Paul is Hermes and Barnabas is Zeus
- Paul gets stoned and left for dead outside the city

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Chapter 15

- The Jerusalem Council
 - The issue: Gentiles and the Law
 - Peter speaks
 - Paul and Barnabas speak
 - James speaks, quotes Amos 9:11-12
- The decision: The Gentiles will be saved by faith; they must keep from idols and blood and from fornication

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Chapter 15

- Paul and Barnabas agree to go on a second journey
- They fight over whether or not to take John Mark
- Barnabas takes John Mark, Paul takes Silas

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Chapter 16

- Paul and Silas are imprisoned in Philippi
- The jailer is converted (and baptized)

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Chapter 17

- Paul goes to Athens and preaches on Mars Hill
- There are a few converts, but many laughed at him

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Chapters 18-20

- Paul goes to Corinth, Ephesus, Macedonia, Greece, Troas, Miletus, and back to Ephesus

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Chapters 21-23

- Paul is seized in Jerusalem
- He gives a defense before the Jews
- Paul is about to be scourged when he informs them that he is a Roman citizen
- Paul then is brought before the chief priests. He is later moved to Caesarea

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Chapters 24-26

- Paul goes before Felix
- Felix puts Paul in jail indefinitely
- Paul later goes before Festus (who succeeded Felix)
- Paul appeals to Caesar (Nero at this point)
- He first goes before Agrippa

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Chapters 27-28

- Paul is sent to Rome
- On the way, they have some sailing problems
- Paul finally makes it to Rome
- He lives there for two years on house arrest
- Likely Paul was eventually released

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Paul's Letters

- First letters
 - Galatians (48-49 A.D.)
 - 1 Thessalonians (51 A.D.)
 - 2 Thessalonians (52 A.D.)
 - 1 Corinthians (early 55 A.D.)
 - 2 Corinthians (late 55 A.D.)
 - Romans (57 A.D.)

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Paul's Letters

- Prison Epistles (Acts 28)
 - Ephesians (60 A.D.)
 - Colossians (60 A.D.)
 - Philemon (60 A.D.)
 - Philippians (61 A.D.)

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Paul's Letters

- Pastoral Epistles
 - 1 Timothy (63-65 A.D.)
 - Titus (63-65 A.D.)
 - 2 Timothy (66-67 A.D.)

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General Epistles

- Hebrews (before 70 A.D.)
- James (45 A.D.)
- 1 & 2 Peter (62 and 64 A.D.)
- 1, 2, & 3 John (87 A.D.)
- Jude (65 A.D.; 80 A.D.)

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Revelation

- Written by John the Apostle while exiled to the island of Patmos
- Apocalyptic in nature, uses many signs and symbols
- Probably written around 95 A.D.
- Written to seven churches in Asia Minor (modern-day Turkey)

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Example #1

- Millenarian Groups
 - "Groups which date from the Middle Ages to recent times who believe so fervently and earnestly that an era of paradise is near they cease all normal activities. People have been known to abandon their homes and leave their farms untended. One group even killed all their cattle in an act of fanaticism, since they believed they soon would not be needing

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Example #1

- Millenarian Groups (cont.)
 - ...them. Others give away or quickly spend their life savings. People quit their jobs and wait.”
 - -from “New Testament Introduction” by Dr. David A. Fiensy, p. 312

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Example #2

- Robert Flemming in 1690 and the book *Apocalyptic Key* in 1701
- The French Revolution of the late 1700s-1800s followed his timetable

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Example #3

- “It is no longer a question of whether or not there will be a world government by the year 2000. My own indication is that we are moving very rapidly toward this state.”
- -Dr. Saul Mendlovitz, July 17, 1972; quoted by Hal Lindsey in 1973

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Example #4

- Edgar Whisenant wrote a book called "88 Reasons Why the Rapture Will Happen in 1988" which sold 4.5 million copies
- He once said, "Only if the Bible is in error am I wrong."

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The Point:

People have been hearing that we're in the end times since the 1st century. They pay no attention to it now.

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