

Essential Church History

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The Living Church

If you ask the average person what the word “church” means, you will get a varied response. For some, it conjures an image of a cathedral, or a building with a cross on its roof. For others, arcane religious ceremonies involving smoke and bells come to mind. For still others, it may stir the memories of Sunday School, or revival meetings, or long-winded Sunday sermons.

But for the early Christians, “church” was not a building or a place of worship (as we shall see later in the lesson, it was not until the fourth century that churches took on a ‘public’ style of architecture and became recognized by such). No, the “church” was defined by its very name in the Greek – *ekklesia*, “the assembly of called out ones.” In the earliest years of the messianic movement we now call “Christianity,” Jesus’ promise in **Matthew 18:20** was a daily reality:

“For where two or three come together in my name, *there am I* with them.”

In the mind of the early believers, the “I am” presence of Jesus himself was manifested in every meeting. Whereas under the Old Covenant, the rabbis taught that “whenever two or three gathered” to study the Torah,¹ the presence of God was manifested, now, under the New Covenant, whenever two or three believers came together *in Jesus’ name*, he presented himself in that meeting. Jesus was not just Emmanuel – “God with us” (**Matthew 1:23**) – during his earthly ministry; he was also “God with us” in every meeting they had (**Matthew 28:20**).

Just as they proclaimed Jesus to be the eternal Messiah, so the first-century believers saw themselves as a messianic community – the ongoing extension of Jesus’ messianic anointing upon the earth. Theirs was a messianic birthright.

- ▶ **The Incredible Spread of the Gospel**
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The Place of Meeting

The moment we realize that to the early believers “church” was not a building or a place of worship, we begin to understand the dynamic that took place within their meetings. The meeting place itself was irrelevant; what mattered was that a body of people gathered, each individually in messianic relationship with Jesus Christ, but corporately expressing the messianic call that had been delegated to them by Jesus when he ascended to heaven. For them, the Day of Pentecost was seen in these messianic terms, and so too was each meeting of the believers.

Take a look at the varied meeting places of the believers:

- **Acts 2:46** – “Every day they *continued to meet together in the temple courts*. They broke bread *in their homes* and ate together with glad and sincere hearts.”
- **Acts 5:42** – “Day after day, *in the temple courts and from house to house*, they never stopped teaching and proclaiming the good news that Jesus is the Christ.”
- **Acts 12:12** – “When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary the mother of John, also called Mark, *where many people had gathered and were praying*.”
- **Acts 16:32** – “Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others *in his house*.”
- **Acts 16:40** – “After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia’s house, *where they met with the brothers and encouraged them*. Then they left.”
- **1 Corinthians 16:19** – “...Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord, and so does *the church that meets at their house*” (see also **Romans 16:3,5**).
- **Colossians 4:15** – “Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and *the church in her house*.”
- **Philemon 2** – “...to Archippus our fellow soldier and to *the church that meets in your home*.”

What we find is that in the first years of Church history, believers would gather in two distinct places:

- **The Temple and the synagogue** – for public worship (**Acts 3:1**)
- **Private homes** – for teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer (**Acts 2:42**)

This was common rabbinic practice, a pattern that Jesus himself had followed. He had taught publicly in the Temple (**Luke 19:47; John 8:2**) and synagogues (**Matthew 4:23; 9:25**) “where all the Jews come together” (**John 18:20**), but he had also taught privately within houses (**Matthew 9:10-17; 13:36-52**). The early believers carried on this rabbinic pattern. In Paul’s ministry, too, we can see this rabbinic pattern constantly surfacing.

Read Acts 19:8-10

Paul knew the power of this public-private rabbinical style of teaching. When the martyrdom of Stephen changed the face of early Christian worship patterns (up till that time, the Jewish believers of Judaea met frequently in the Temple and in the synagogues, just as they had before faith in Jesus), Paul knew that it was not enough just to persecute the disciples in the public arena of the Temple and the synagogues. And so Paul went “from house to house” (**Acts 8:3**) to drag them off to prison, for he recognized the “house to house” dynamic of the Church and he was determined to throttle the growth of this messianic movement on the private, as well as the public, level. When Paul finally converted, he automatically continued to use this same public-private rabbinical pattern to spread the Gospel, first among the Jews and then among the Gentiles.

Read Acts 18:4-11**The Style of Meeting**

Needless to say, the style of meeting used by the early believers was markedly different from most Christian meetings today. Christian meetings were modelled on the simple service of the synagogue (rather than the complex rituals of the Temple), and although they probably had an order of service loosely based on the synagogue style, there was wide-ranging participation from all the believers (note **Ephesians 5:19-20; Colossians 3:6; 1 Corinthians 14:26**). As A M Renwick and A M Harman explain:

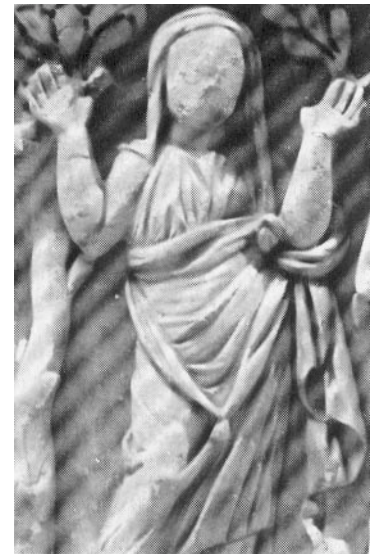
“The very essence of church organization and Christian life and worship in the first two centuries was simplicity. There was an absence of that formalism and pomp which took possession of the field in later times when spiritual life declined. Christians met for worship whenever they could, often in private homes and sometimes in more public places, such as ‘the school of Tyrannus.’ Their worship was free and spontaneous under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and had not yet become inflexible in its form through the use of manuals of devotion. The Church was vigorously active. Not only the pastor but also many of those present took part in the services, for to them the priesthood of all believers was a tremendous reality.”²

The letter of **1 Corinthians** (written about AD 55) provides the earliest description of the meeting style of the Christians. Although written to bring correction, Paul is not dismissing what they were doing but instructing them to do it all “in a fitting and orderly way” (**1 Corinthians 14:40**). The New Testament writings indicate their meetings had seven main components:

- **Worship** – The central focus of everything they did was worshipping the Lord by the Spirit of God, giving thanks and glorifying the Lord (**Philippians 3:3; Hebrews 12:28**).
- **The Lord’s Table** – This was a “love feast” or agape meal. It was a time of fellowship (communion) together (**1 Corinthians 11:17-34**), during which

time believers gathered to “break bread” (**Acts 2:42,46; 20:7**). This had been a common practice for Jewish families. To them it had represented their sharing together in suffering as a nation. When the Lord Jesus had broken the bread at the Last Supper with his disciples and instituted the New Covenant, he had taken the bread and declared that now it represented him: “This is my body which is broken for you!” (**1 Corinthians 11:24**, KJV). So, for the Christian believers, the Lord’s Supper was a covenantal meal in which believers fellowshiped together in the New Covenant.

- **Ministry to one another** – There was a total involvement by all the believers in the early gatherings of the Church. It was participation by all. Paul likened the Church to a body, each part important to the other and each with a specific function to fulfill. It was the believers ministering to one another that would make this a reality, says Paul, for he says in **Ephesians 4:16**: “From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work” (read also **1 Corinthians 12; 14:26-33**).
- **Reading of Scripture** – Paul instructed Timothy to “devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture” (**1 Timothy 4:13**). This was the Old Testament, which was “able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus” (**2 Timothy 3:15**), but there was also the reading out of the letters sent to the churches from the apostles (**1 Thessalonians 5:27**). The early Church regarded the apostles as being commissioned by Christ himself to “teach all that I have commanded you” (**Matthew 28:18-20**) and they treated their teachings as the word of God himself (**1 Thessalonians 2:13**). So their letters were early considered as inspired Scripture (Peter refers to Paul’s letters as such in **2 Peter 3:15-16**) and were circulated amongst all the churches (see **Colossians 4:16**).
- **Exhortation and teaching in the Word** – The reading of the Scripture was followed by the expounding of what had been read. Following his instruction to Timothy concerning the public reading of Scripture, Paul goes on to tell him “devote yourself to...preaching and to teaching” (**1 Timothy 4:13** – see also **Acts 13:1; 20:7,11**).
- **Prayer** – This was a keynote in the gathering of early believers (**Acts 4:23-31 12:5-19**). Prayer, which is emphasized by Paul in **1 Timothy 2:1-2** and **Ephesians 6:18-20**, frequently involved the raising of “holy hands” to the Lord (**1 Timothy 2:8**).



During the early centuries, Christians raised their hands in prayer, as depicted in this third century Roman carving.

- **Singing** – Three types of song are mentioned in **Ephesians 5:19** and **Colossians 3:16**: “psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.” Psalms are drawn directly from the Scripture and are songs of praise to God in the midst of the experiences of life. Hymns declare who he is, what he is like and what he has done. Spiritual songs are spontaneous songs of worship from the heart...the “making melody in your heart to the Lord” (**Colossians 3:16**, KJV). It is thought that passages such as **Philippians 2:6-11**, **Colossians 1:15-20**, **Ephesians 5:14** and **1 Timothy 3:16** may be early hymns.

The Zeal of the Church

The Church expanded into every corner of the Roman Empire through waves of evangelism. These early Christians used a variety of ways to communicate their faith. Their four main approaches were:

Personal witness

Read Colossians 4:6

Personal one-to-one witness was by far the most common way Christians proclaimed the Gospel in the early centuries. Many people were brought to faith in Christ through the prolonged exposure to Christians and also through casual encounters. Justin Martyr, for example, became a Christian because he entered into conversation with an old man. Cyprian came to the Lord through talking to a church elder. As time went by family influence also became a strong method of propagating the Gospel to the next generation. Origen, a church leader in the third century, grew up in a Christian family and discovered his faith in Christ through his parents' influence.

Christian lifestyle

Read 1 Peter 2:12

The Christians did not share only their words. They were also known for their acts of kindness. Lucian of Samosata,* an opponent of Christianity, describes in his satire, *The Death of the Peregrine*, the care the Christians showed to their imprisoned fellow-believers. He depicts their unwearied visits, the many gifts brought to them, and the expressions of sympathy brought by messengers coming from great distances. When outbreaks of plague hit Alexandria and nearly everyone fled for their lives, it was the Christians who stayed and cared for the sick and buried the dead. In the uncaring and immoral society of the day these acts did not go unnoticed. The very lifestyle of the Christian was the most powerful influence in evangelism.

* Lucian (c.120-200), ridiculed the Christian religion, which he lumped together with all the other religious and superstitious beliefs, old and new, pervading the Roman Empire during the second century. He regarded Christianity as only one of the many follies of mankind. He saw the miracles as mere jugglery, and their belief of immortality as an empty dream. And even when he wrote positively of their contempt of death and their brotherly love for their fellow-Christians, he viewed this as a silly enthusiasm.

Public preaching and debate

Read Acts 18:24-28

The Christians took care to explain the Gospel intelligently and to counter the attacks of critics. Apollos was a good example of this.

Preaching out in the open is common in the book of **Acts**. The Christians would choose a public place where people gathered – like the market – and proclaim the message of Christ. This would have become very hazardous after the persecution under Nero, however, and this style of public declaration is rarely mentioned during the second and third centuries.

Literature

Read Philippians 1:7

In his day, Paul spoke of *defending* and *confirming* the Gospel. He was defending the Gospel against those who opposed it, and confirming the Gospel to the believers. Generally this was done by the means of public debate, like mentioned above. But as time passed, this defense of the Gospel was also put down onto paper and published. In fact, all four Gospel accounts are examples of the use of literature as a means of “defending and confirming” the Gospel.

As the Gospel continued to spread throughout the Roman Empire, there arose opposition in the form of rumors, slanders and accusations by the pagans against the Christians. In response to this constant barrage of untruths, a number of Christian writers arose to defend the Christian faith. These men are known as “the Apologists.” This does not mean they were saying sorry for anything. The word “apologist” comes from the Greek word *apologia*, which means “defense” – the kind a lawyer gives at a trial. In the first three centuries much literature was written to explain the Christian faith and to countermand these false accusations, and such writing was a particular characteristic of second century witness.

“The greatest of the early Apologists was Justin Martyr, a most earnest Christian and a true lover of learning. He was born at Sychem in Palestine c.100 AD and died as a martyr at Rome in 163 AD in the reign of Marcus Aurelius. His *First Apology* was addressed to the emperor Antonius Pius and the Senate, and the whole Roman people. The *Second Apology* is short and is to the Senate only. His lengthiest work is the *Dialogue with Trypho the Jew*, which aims at explaining the Christian faith to the Jews.”³

The Character of the Church

Read John 13:33-34

This proved the most powerful cause of Christian success – their practical expression of love. Tertullian tells us that the pagans commented: “See how these Christians love one another.” The Christians expressed their love by their care of the widows and orphans and the poor, by their visits to fellow-Christians in prison

or to those condemned to working in the mines, and by their acts of compassion in times of war and during natural catastrophes such as earthquakes or famine.

Pliny, who was governor of Bithynia in Asia Minor from AD 109 to 111, regarded the Christian message as a “depraved and extravagant superstition” and was extremely worried at how rapidly it was spreading. The character of the Christians surprised him, however. According to correspondence he wrote to the emperor Trajan, he discovered that they “were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang an anthem to Christ as to God, and bound themselves by a solemn oath not to commit any wicked deed, but to abstain from all fraud, theft and adultery, never to break their word, or deny a trust when called upon to honor it; after which it was their custom to separate, and then meet again to partake of food, but food of an ordinary and innocent kind.”⁴ In the hard Roman world of his day, this high standard of morality must have seemed almost incredible to Pliny.

But this did not stop pagans from casting Christians in a bad light. The Alexandrian Celsus is one example of this. According to *Who’s Who in Christian History*:

“Celsus did not trust Christians because they met secretly and did not support the Roman state. The doctrine of the Incarnation (which taught that Jesus as the Son of God took on a human form and nature) was offensive to him. He was annoyed that some Christians answered his objections by saying that one must ‘simply believe’ and not investigate spiritual truths so closely. Celsus appreciated the Christians’ standard of morality and their worship of one supreme, immaterial God, but he claimed that those ideas had already been formulated by pagan philosophers.”⁵

Towards the end of the second century, Celsus authored a book called *The True Word*, where he wrote:

“Far from us, say the Christians, be any man possessed of any culture wisdom or judgment; their aim is to convince only worthless and contemptible people, idiots, slaves, poor women, and children. They behave like mountebanks and beggars; they would not dare to address an audience of intelligent men...but if they see a group of young people or slaves or rough folk, there they push themselves in and seek to win the admiration of the crowd. It is the same in private houses. We see wool-carders, cobblers, washermen, people of the utmost ignorance and lack of education. They are careful not to open their mouths in the presence of their masters, who are of full age and able to judge for themselves. But if they manage to get children alone, or women as senseless as themselves, then they set to work to put forth their wondrous tales. These are the only ones whom they manage to turn into believers.”⁶

In his description of the Christians reaching out to the slaves, the poor, the uneducated, and the young, Celsus would have been telling the truth. But this was only half the story. Many of the educated class and intellectuals also became believers. Justin Martyr, who studied the philosophies of his day, especially

Platonism, is one example. He “was born a pagan and became a keen student of philosophy. He went from place to place earnestly seeking truth, visiting Rome, Athens, Alexandria and other important cities in his search. One day, walking near the shore at Ephesus, he met an old man ‘of meek and venerable manners’ who pointed him to the Scriptures and Jesus Christ.”⁷ At this junction, Justin Martyr discovered faith in Christ and found what he called “the true philosophy.”

Endurance of the Church

Read Matthew 10:16-25

Jesus had prepared the believers for what lay ahead. Persecution was expected (**Matthew 5:10-12**). Paul also wrote that “[a]ll who live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted” (**2 Timothy 3:12**). And James wrote that believers should “[c]onsider it pure joy...whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything” (**James 1:2-4**). And in **verse 12**, he wrote:

“Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.”

These were not idle words. James wrote them because Christians really *were* facing “trials of many kinds” – the full spectrum from tough opposition to outright persecution. In the same vein, Peter wrote in **1 Peter 4:12**:

“Dear friends, do not be surprised at the painful trial you are suffering, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.”

Following the outbreak of persecution after Steven’s martyrdom, the Church continued to experience it at different times and in different ways. The reasons for the persecutions in the first, second and third centuries were greatly varied. Catastrophes like barbarian invasions or floods or bad harvests were seen as a sign of the gods’ displeasure because of the Christian ‘atheism.’* The Christian writer Tertullian (AD 160-225), a witty apologist, once sarcastically commented:

“If the Tiber rises too high or the Nile too low, the cry is ‘The Christians to the lion.’ All of them to a single lion?”

Pagan society revolved around idolatrous ceremonies, and since these were avoided by Christians, Christians were seen to be anti-social. Furthermore, their nonconformity to immoral behavior (**1 Peter 4:3-4**) was interpreted to mean that they had a “hatred of the human race.” On top of this, the dislike that was

* To a pagan in the first three centuries AD, an “atheist” was someone who did not believe in and did not pay tribute to the pagan gods. It is of strong historic irony that Christians, who together with the Jews were firm believers in an all-powerful Creator God, were charged with, of all things, “atheism.”

widely felt for Christians escalated when family members became believers, which had a disrupting effect on family relationships. F F Bruce writes of the general attitude towards them in the first three centuries:

“Tacitus calls [Christians] ‘a class of people loathed for their vices’ and says that, when Nero tried to fix the crime of arson on them, a great number were convicted, not so much on this charge (which broke down on examination) but as enemies of humanity. He makes it clear that, in his opinion (and no doubt in the opinion of many others), even if they did not set Rome on fire, they fully deserved the most exemplary punishment because of their general character.”⁸

Christians were considered:

Socially undesirable

In times of the most severe persecution, Christians were forced to meet underground in the Roman catacombs. Their seclusion and secretiveness encouraged rumors about their moral and social undesirability. Earle Cairns explains:

“Public rumor made them guilty of incest, cannibalism and unnatural practices. Misunderstanding concerning the meaning of “eating and drinking” the elements representing Christ’s body and blood easily led to the rumor that the Christians killed and ate infants in sacrifice to their God. Word of the “kiss of peace” was easily twisted into charges of incest and other types of immoral conduct repugnant to the cultured Roman mind.”⁹

Politically dangerous

Their claim that they were of another kingdom ruled by another king, and their refusal to take part in Roman pagan festivals or eat meat offered to idols, made them appear as a political danger. As Earle Cairns writes:

“Religion could be tolerated only as it contributed to the stability of the state. Since the rapidly growing Christian religion was exclusive in its claims on the moral and spiritual loyalty of those who accepted Christ, when a choice had to be made between loyalty to Christ and loyalty to Caesar, Caesar was bound to take second place. This was conceived by the Roman leaders, bent on preserving the classical culture within the framework of the Roman imperial state, as disloyalty to the state; and they saw Christians as those who were trying to set up a state within a state....The exclusive sovereignty of Christ clashed with Caesar’s proud claims to exclusive sovereignty.”¹⁰

Rome was remarkably tolerant of the religions of the lands that their legions had subdued. The emperor, however, was looked upon, and treated as, divine. As long as a person sacrificed and offered incense on the altars devoted to the genius of the Roman emperor, he was then free to practice another private religion.

In relation to the first century Jews, Rome made its only exception. For the Jews, Rome even dropped the requirement of burning incense to the emperor. This

was because of the Jews' fanatical loyalty to God and their readiness to soak their land in blood rather than bow their knee to any other god.

As long as Rome considered Christians just another sect of the Jews, they enjoyed this same immunity – but as soon as the Jews made it known that they would have nothing to do with the Christians, the situation dramatically changed. The Christians, of course, continued to refuse homage to the emperor (just as the Jews did), but without being a state-recognized religion, they fell into the class of a “superstition” – a dangerous superstition that engendered disloyalty to the emperor and the state. And so the imperial ideology gave an especially powerful reason for the hostility towards Christians and during the second half of the century this hostility intensified. F F Bruce describes the attitude the Christian faced:

“Christian apologists continued to protest that they were innocent of any crime, but their protests went unheeded. In the second and third centuries those who voiced such protests were told that they might easily prove their loyalty to the empire by worshipping the state gods, and in particular by burning incense to the emperor's image or swearing by his divinity. Such actions were, of course, impossible for any conscientious Christian.”¹¹

Religiously upsetting

As well as the political and social reasons for the persecution, there was a religious reason. The Romans were not against adding a new idol to the many already in their pantheon, as long as that “god” was subservient to the priority claims of the Roman state religion.

On top of this, the Romans' religion was very visible. Its idols, altars, priests, rites and colorful processions were all practices that people could see. The Christians, however, had no idol. There was nothing visible to which their prayers were addressed. To the Romans this meant nothing else but *atheism*.

Economically threatening

On top of all that is mentioned above, the Christians were also an economic threat. The livelihood of many was endangered by the spread of Christianity. A clear example of this is in Paul's experience in Ephesus. In **Acts 19:24-27**, we discover:

“A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business for the craftsmen. He called them together, along with the workmen in related trades, and said: ‘Men, you know we receive a good income from this business. And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that man-made gods are no gods at all. There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited, and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty.’”

It was the workmen, tradesmen and craftsmen who met together to discuss the “Christian problem.” They were more worried about losing their income than the direct threat to Artemis/Diana worship. Priests, idol makers, soothsayers, painters, architects, and sculptors would all lose their livelihood if the Christians emptied the temples of its worshippers.

The Growth of the Church

History attests to the truth of Tertullian’s claim:

“The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church.”

Instead of being destroyed, as was the intention, the Church grew under persecution. By AD 311, just before Constantine’s ascent to the imperial throne, the message of Christ had spread throughout the Roman Empire, and probably as far east as India. There were now churches in every large town in the known world. No area of the Empire was without a testimony of the Gospel. The strongest concentration of churches were in Syria, Asia Minor, North Africa and Egypt, and in notable cities such as Rome and Lyons. Christians saw themselves as a fellowship of believers throughout the world.

Earle Cairns describes the rapid growth of the Church:

“During the first century it had been confined largely to the eastern section of the empire, with the Jews being given the first chance to accept Christianity as the gospel reached new cities. During the second century, expansion was rapid among the Greek-speaking Gentile population of the empire. The church in Alexandria became the chief church of Egypt. Christians could be found in all parts of the empire by 200. The emphasis during the third century was on the spread of the gospel to the Latins of the western section of the empire. A powerful church with Carthage as its intellectual center grew up in North Africa. Estimates of the size of the church by 300 vary between 5 and 15 percent of the population of the empire, which was between 50 million and 75 million.”¹²

Henry Chadwick describes it further:

“By 200 Tertullian witnesses not only to the vigor of the Church in Carthage and Africa Proconsularis (North Tunisia) but to the existence of churches far afield in the provinces of Byzacena (South Tunisia), Numidia, and Mauretania (Algeria)...The Christians themselves wondered at the speed and extent of Church expansion before Constantine. It is hardly surprising that the Church felt itself to be riding on the crest of a wave, and faced the world with that confidence which is a marked feature of the early apologists.”¹³

Despite the withering persecution, the Church still flourished. The Christians of the second, third and fourth centuries looked forward to the day when the Roman Empire would fall to the advance of the kingdom of God.

As Tertullian expressed it:

“We are but of yesterday and we have filled all you have – cities, islands, forts, towns, assembly halls, even military camps, tribes, town councils, the palace, senate and forum. We have left you nothing but the temples.”¹⁴

¹ *The Mishnah*, m. 'Abot 3:2, 6; Mek. Bahodesh 11.48ff; compare m. Berakot 7:3.

² A M Renwick and A M Harman, *The Story of the Church* (Leister, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 1986), p.22.

³ A M Renwick and A M Harman, *The Story of the Church* (Leister, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 1986), pp.29-30.

⁴ Pliny, quoted in *The History of Christianity*, editors Tim Dowley et al (Oxford, UK: Lion Publishing, 1994), p.127.

⁵ C Hicks, *Who's Who in Christian History*, excerpted from QuickVerse 6.0, Deluxe Edition.

⁶ Celsus, quoted by Origen, *Against Celsus*, III,49-55.

⁷ F F Bruce, *The Defense of the Gospel in the New Testament* (Leister, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989).

⁹ Earle E Cairns, *Christianity through the Centuries* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), p.89.

¹⁰ Earle E Cairns, *Christianity through the Centuries* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), pp.88-89.

¹¹ F F Bruce, *The Defense of the Gospel in the New Testament* (Leister, UK: Inter-Varsity Press, 1989), pp.63-64.

¹² Earle E Cairns, *Christianity through the Centuries* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1981), pp.93-94.

¹³ Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (London, UK: 1990), pp.61-66.

¹⁴ Tertullian, quoted by Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church* (London, UK: 1990), pp.61-66.

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