

Abandoned Megachurch Offers Rare Glimpse Back in Time

Editor's note: This documentary contains mild language as well as explicit graffiti.

For all of the nastiness that is found on social media and the internet these days, every once in a while you find a true gem that captures your attention and imagination, filling you with gladness over what you just witnessed.

Recently, the YouTube channel Ruin Road posted a now-viral video featuring the abandoned megachurch complex of the Akron Baptist Temple.

The channel is known for it's exploration of abandoned buildings, and according to the description, "Ruin Road dives into the history of the abandoned buildings, dead malls, true crime and haunted locations that we visit."

But something about Akron Baptist has struck a cord with many viewers as it is well on it's way to becoming the channels most-watched video to date, currently sitting at 750,000 views since Apr. 6.

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A crew from the YouTube channel embarked on a mission of discovery into the halls that once held thousands of worshippers on Sunday mornings.

Boasting a massive radio and ministry media for it's time, the church is littered with abandoned cassette tapes and VHS recordings of old sermons, as well as in-house produced gospel music tracks and a radio program.

Yet for all of the wear and decay that has made it's way

throughout the church, the beautifully impressive stained glass found throughout the grounds remains intact and vibrant to this day.

Leaning into a deep-history lesson as they walk the abandoned rooms throughout the church grounds, you feel as though you are living the history of that church with those in attendance over the decades.

“Sitting in the southern side of Akron, Ohio, lies the decaying remains of the Akron Baptist Temple a vast expanse of building that was one of the first mega churches in the United States,” the documentary shares. “Akron Baptist Temple would get its modest beginnings in 1935 with just 80 members it was headed by Dallas F. Billington, a southern evangelist who had moved to Akron to work at Goodyear Tire.”

Throughout the church’s history it endured much, from expansive growth and new constructions to a devastating fire in the 1970s, suspected to be from arsonists.

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As the short documentary closes with before and after video of what the Akron Baptist Temple looked like during it’s heyday, to the tune of “It Is Well With My Soul” sung by the Akron Baptist Chorale, one can’t help but think back on our own past histories of church attendance.

While watching documentaries on churches such as this may bring with it pangs of sadness, nostalgia or joy, we must not get swept up in the things of the past.

It is in these moments of reflection that is a perfect opportunity to take into account how far the Lord has taken us in life, from where we once were and through the stormy seasons to where we are at now. Through it all it is essential

to remember that while we may have fond memories that took place in certain church buildings, we are the church, and the Lord will never abandon us (Isa. 41:10).

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