

# RESPONDING TO CHURCH HISTORY

## A LOOK AT CHURCH HISTORY KNOWING HOW IT BEGAN

*"... continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them..."*

~ 2 Timothy 3:14

### 1. Mystery History: *Our history is unknown, unpopular, or unappealing*

- a. The nature of our message was a mystery – Col 1:25-26, Rom 16:25
- b. It can appear as if it has been kept secret since the church began, too.
- c. 'Church history' is not mid-Acts Pauline dispensational, what now?
- d. How should we respond when 'church history' declares, "*you're wrong!*"
- e. We can't erase history, and rewriting the history books can be too little and too late...  
But knowing how the church began can help us look at church history differently.

### 2. The Importance of History

- a. History is important for origin, heritage, and learning what people do (not what is true)
- b. History appeals to our desire for being first, consensus, and partaking in tradition.
- c. Timothy is told to "hold fast" "keep" "commit" and "continue" – 2 Tim 1:13, 2:2
- d. Tradition is not always bad; bad tradition is bad - 2 Tim 3:10-14; 2 Th 2:15; Rom 16:17

### 3. Church History Began with Paul

- a. It may not be easy to find us in history: Bible believing (literal) Pauline dispensational
- b. Paul was the church father, first as a pattern – 1 Tim 1:16, 1 Cor 4:15, 1 Cor 9:17, 11:1
- c. What if we become enemies of history by speaking truth – 1 Pet 1:18, Gal 4:16
- d. The goal is Truth (God), not History (people) - Gal 1:8-10
- e. Paul did not receive truth from man or his fathers' tradition - Gal 1:11-14
- f. His message did not conform to the tradition at the time – Col 2:8-9, 16, 18-19

### 4. Getting Faith Right

- a. Are we trying to learn what other people believed? or what Bible teaches to believe?
- b. "His"-story is not a children's book – It is a battle. All men have not faith - 2 Th 3:1-2
- c. God never promised a majority, but he died for all men - 1 Tim 2:4; Eph 3:9, Rom 3:4
- d. Much disputing, no small dissension - Acts 15:1-2, 4-7
- e. Removed from ... the grace of Christ unto another gospel - Gal 1:6-8
- f. Preacheth another Jesus, another spirit, another gospel - 2 Cor 11:1-4
- g. There were heretics, division, and opposition against Paul – Ti 3:9-10, 1 Cor 11:18-19
- h. "Historical Christianity" "1<sup>st</sup> century church" does not have a consensus either.

### 5. What to Expect from Church History – 2 Cor 10:12-13

- a. The mirror of church history is dingy and broken. Most of history is in the dustbin.
- b. History tells us what was, but not all that was. Bible history is only infallible history.
- c. The time will come (future history) .... 1 Tim 4:1-3, 2 Tim 4:3 – 2 Tim 3:1-6
- d. All in Asia be turned away from me – 2 Tim 1:15, 4:16-17

## **6. Our Authority is God (not History)**

- a. Our final authority is the Lord Jesus Christ, and his book – Rom 3:4; 2 Tim 3:16-17
- b. The Lord has a history that is mainly martyrs and outcasts
- c. The book has a history that is harder to change than peoples belief (AV1611 KJV1769)
- d. Paul had no church history (neither do we?)
- e. Paul had to lay a foundation (it seems we are still uncovering it)
- f. We are not looking to go back to the 1<sup>st</sup> century church, we have a Bible.
- g. History is for learning, but find your place in God's work in the faithful few – Rom 15:4