**Why the University Should Matter to the Church**

Episode #4: History as a Worldview Marker

Biblical | Theological | Historical | Philosophical | Practical | Example

**Examples** *How the Irish Saved Civilization* Thomas Cahill, “On the right side of history,” heritage = history, genealogy. Joseph Campbell *The Power of Myth*. (1) Everyone has a myth, a story, a non-historical legend (2) Everyone’s myth is true for them (3) Everyone’s myth is informed by their own reality, family, culture (4) Myth is not supernatural in origin. 8 worldview Qs. Eusebius of Caesarea, *The History of The Church*.

**Memory is the basis for history. God expects us to learn about Him from the past.** Deut 4:9, 10; 6:7-9; 8:10-20; Pss 77:10-12; 78:1-8; 1 Cor 11:23-26. *“I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles” (2 Peter 3:2).*

*Hebrews were “whole thinkers.”* To the First Testament mind, the mental act of recall was seamlessly linked with physical action. Remembrance led to recitation leading to public proclamation pointing to a memorial or holiday event. Acting upon statements of truth from the past was to consistently affect believers’ conduct (Deut 13:1-3; 2 Tim 1:13-14). Remembering how God has worked in the past should give one confidence about how He is working now and in the future. God’s working in history reveals His character. Learning from past actions and mistakes can help people avoid repeating those mistakes.

**Related Concepts:** 1. Note that Hebrews and Christians based their concept on historical events contrasting *ritual* with *remembrance* (Matt 26:27-29; 1 Cor 11:26-33). **2.** God instructed His people to establish feasts, festivals, and memorials as reminders of how He had worked in their history (Num 15:39-40; Ex 12:14; Deut 11:18; Josh 4:7). **3.** Memory is the basis for treatment of others (Deut 5:15; 15:15; 16:12; 24:18, 22; Heb 13:7). **4.** Memory is the basis for relationship with God (1 Chron 16:8, 12; Deut 8:2; 24:9; Matt 26:13; Luke 22:19; Heb 10:3). **5.** Reminding is a necessary, ongoing process (Eccl 1:11; 2:16; Rom 15:15; 2 Pet 1:12-15; 3:2). **6.** Reminders are the remedy for “forgetfulness” (Deut 8:11-20; Ps 106:13, 21; Ezek 16:43-63; Isa 51:13; Hosea 13:6; James 1:25; 2 Pet 3:5; 2 Peter 3:8)

**History has a purpose, an end in view designed by God.** Isa 14:26-27; 46:10-11; Dan 2:20-23; Hab 1-2; Eph 1:3-6,19-22; Col 1:15-18; Rev 5:9-14. “For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea” (Hab 2:14).

*Human history has a beginning and an end*, a purpose, an ultimate destination. History does not "repeat itself." Though similar occurrences may be chronicled, God's ultimate plan for the world is Jesus' established, physical kingdom on Earth. God personally plans and oversees all the affairs of men. Nothing happens outside of God's design or purpose. All things are done for God's glory. God ordains the rise and fall of rulers and nations. The personal, eternal Creator is in control of the smallest detail to the greatest event. Though the flow of history may sometimes be a human mystery, all events are sovereignly interrelated.

**Related Concepts: 1.** Christianity is one of the few world religions dependent upon historical corroboration for its claims (John 1:1-18; 14:8, 9; 21:30; 1 Cor 15:1-3; 2 Pet 1:16-18). **2.** The Egyptian and Babylonian views of “time” emphasized a cyclical or circular view of history, leaving people at the mercy of *perceived* impersonal, whimsical, supernatural forces. The Hebrews, on the other hand believed in the personal, eternal creator giving folks meaning, potential, fulfillment, and a goal in life. Each day is a new choice, opportunity, and responsibility with something and Someone to live for (Eccl 5:18-20). **3.** History teaches us about God’s character (Deuteronomy 4:32-40; Psalm 77:10-12; 143:5). **4.** God controls the rise and fall of nations and rulers (Job 12:23; Prov 8:15-16; 21:1; Jer 46-50; Dan 7). **5.** Life lived apart from God is ultimately meaningless (Ecclesiastes “vanity,” “under the sun”). However, God also uses unbelievers to accomplish His purposes (Ps 76:10; Isa 44:28-45:1). **6.** God’s judgment against nations and individuals is so that they will know He Is Lord (Ezek 25-39). Note the repeated refrain: “Then they will know that I am the Lord”; Dan 4:19-37). **7.** Work is meaningful not monotonous when understood as a gift of God. **8.** History is a record. Man’s records include the bias of the recorder. Compare Ecclesiastes 2:17-23 with 2:24-26, noting that the latter contains a God-centered perspective***.* 9.**Historical interpretation is susceptible to subjectivity and bias. History should be based on verifiable primary source material rather than on latter secondary interpretation that may have been “reshaped” to fit a particular worldview. The Christian philosophy of history holds as its focal point the literal and physical incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus. God's Son came to earth in real space and time (2 Peter 1:16-18; 1 John 1:1-3).

**History began in eternity.** Gen 1:1; Eccles 3:10-11; Dan 4:34-35; John 17:5, 24; Heb 1:1-2; Rev 22:1-7 “And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment—to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.” (Eph 1:9-10)

*God is the author of history.* God created all matter, space, and time but God does not wear a watch. He is not bound by time (2 Pet 3:8) since He is outside of and apart from time, but God has chosen to work within time to accomplish His plan. Jesus is the central person in God’s plan and human history. Only He can, by His coming in the form of a man, bridge the gap between God’s eternal kingdom and the temporal world (Isa 9:6-7; Gal 4:4-5). When studying history, we must frame our understanding of people, places, and events in the grand narrative of Gods’ plan to make it meaningful.

**Related Concepts: 1.** God is eternal. The temporal, finite world exists because there is One who is “from everlasting to everlasting” (Ps 90:1-2), whose “dominion is eternal” (Dan 4:34, 35), (and who works within time for human benefit (Pss 31:15; 39:4-7). **2.** God is creator. All things, including time, were made by and for Himself (Gen 1:1; Ro 11:33-36; Col 1:15-17). As Creator, His Lordship reigns, His ownership rules (Lev 25:23; Ps 50:9-12). **3.** God foreordains. The plan of God for His world was “declared from the distant past” (Isa 45:21; 46:9-11; Eph 1:9-11). **4.** God is sovereign. He controls all events. There are no accidents or coincidences. Neither luck, nor destiny, nor chance, nor fates, contribute to any earthly event (Matt 6:25-34; 10:26-33; John 1:12-13; Acts 2:23; 4:27, 28; 17:24-28). **5.** Christians should study the Bible, and stand on its on sound doctrine. Church history should be studied to see how previous Christians dealt with heresy in their time. Singing theologically correct hymns practices the clear teaching of Colossians 3:16. Catechizing children in God’s Truth and sound doctrine is the duty of every Christian parent. Not placing too much emphasis on a single person, prescription, or curriculum acknowledges the diversity of explication of truth that gives a broader understanding in which to discern Scripture. The importance of community, “encouraging each other with sound doctrine” (Titus 1:9), is the antidote to the person who creates factions within Christ’s body (1 Cor 11:19; Gal 1:8-9; 5:20; 2 Pet 2:1).

Why History is important @ Church**.** **1.** If a church, denomination, or Christian college gives up the literal, historical interpretation of Genesis, that institution has no foundation of nor application for any of life’s great questions. **2.** If the resurrection is not a literal, historical fact there is no Church. **3.** We should never forget our history, nor should we relive it. **4.** History will always be “interpreted,” thus the importance of multiple viewpoints and dogged historical research. History, like all ideas, begins with a person’s assumptions. Why History is the most important subject. The present is built on the past. Planning for the future should include an examination of past right and wrong, good and bad ideas. Historical heroes' matter for transformational learning. Maintains our focus for meaning, purpose, mission