

STUDY PACK 3

THE STUDY OF HISTORY

“The special province of history ... is to learn why it was _____
_____. For a bare statement of an occurrence is interesting
indeed, but not instructive; but when this is supplemented by a _____
the study of history becomes fruitful.”

~~ Polybius, Roman historian from the Second Century B.C. ~~

“Historians are the _____ and _____, whom we
can never sufficiently, _____, _____ and _____. History is nothing
else than _____, that is, _____ and _____, which we
should believe as if they stood in Scripture.”

~~ Martin Luther ~~

“I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and this is the lamp of experience. I know of
no other way of judging the future but by the past.”

~~ Patrick Henry, 1774 ~~

I. HISTORY IS OF GREAT IMPORTANCE FROM A CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

- A. God has revealed _____ in history, Eph. 1:11.
- B. We are explicitly commanded to make known _____, Ps 105:1.
- C. Christianity is not a mere ethical or doctrinal system but is _____
_____, I Cor. 15.
- D. Because history is the vehicle for God’s work in the world, we should expect to
learn from it.
- E. Much of the Bible is history.
- F. History defines and touches our lives.
- G. History allows us to temporarily step outside of our own culture.

II. THE TRUE INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY IS _____

- A. Should a historian be objective?
 - 1. If “objective” means unaffected by presuppositions, then no historian can
be truly objective. It is not only impossible but undesirable.
 - a. History involves making judgments about _____.
 - b. History involves making judgments about _____.

- c. History involves interpreting the _____ and how they _____.
 - d. Judgments are formed in a _____.
2. If “objective” means unaffected by a false presupposition, then objectivity is desirable and possible to some degree.
- a. Only God is completely free of false presuppositions.
 - b. God’s perspective is revealed to us in Scripture. Therefore, we must seek to understand and apply God’s perspective to the study of history.
 - c. The events of history themselves can help us break free of false presuppositions.

Therefore, we must give careful attention to let the raw material of history speak for itself.

III. GOD IN HIS PROVIDENCE DIRECTS AND GOVERNS ALL THINGS THAT TAKE PLACE

- A. All events both large and small are under _____, Acts 4:27-28; Matt. 10:29; Ex. 4:11.
- B. All events have _____, Eph. 1:11, Rom. 8:28.
- C. We can and should expect to learn some of the purposes of many events by studying them.

IV. THE BIBLE REVEALS TO US _____

- A. There are four events that color all of human history.
 - 1. _____ (Gen.1; Eph. 1:11)
 - 2. _____ (Gen.3; Rom. 5:12-19, 8:20)
 - 3. _____
 - 4. _____
- B. This framework gives shape to history.
 - 1. History is not cyclical as in Eastern thought.
 - 2. History is not random as in existential or postmodern thought.
 - 3. History is not marked by unstoppable evolution and progress.

4. History has a beginning, a path, and an end, all governed by the sovereign purposes of God for His glory.

V. DAVID FISHER LISTS THREE PURPOSES FOR STUDYING HISTORY

“This then is the great challenge of the Christian teacher of history: (1) to lay a foundation of Biblical truths so that his students can view history from a Biblical perspective; (2) to instruct his students in the same ways of God revealed in His Word so that they can see the hand of God readily at work in history; and (3) to make practical application of history- its lessons, it’s warnings — to the lives of students. Thus, teaching the providence of God in history becomes a valuable vehicle to communicate to our students not only that God’s providential hand is over history, but also that His concern and care is over their lives. May Joshua’s words of instruction to the children of Israel ring loud and long in our classroom: ‘That all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever’ (Josh. 4:24).”

VI. THE LESSONS OF HISTORY ARE NORMALLY MISSED BY PEOPLE

“Those who don’t learn from the past are doomed _____.”
~~ Santayana ~~

“We learn one thing from history: _____.”
~~ G. W. Hegel ~~

- A. We know the outline of history from _____.
- B. The Bible explains _____ to us.
- C. The Bible explains _____ to us.
- D. The Bible declares both _____ and _____ to us.