

# Preaching on Church History

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The older I get and the more I observe what some brethren are doing and saying, the more convinced I become that the Lord's people do not know much about church history. Surely, some of the things being tolerated and/or promoted among brethren nowadays would not be going on if there were a better grasp of what has gone before. I believe that those of us who preach need to preach on this subject far more than we have been doing in recent years to help close this serious "knowledge gap." The following things will be accomplished by increased knowledge of church history:

1. ***One will understand the church as Christ established it.*** Church history begins with the establishment of the church under the direction of the inspired apostles (John 16:13; Acts 2:37–47). If men (including brethren) never see the beauty of the original, primitive church (or once seeing it, they forget it), they will have no Biblical model in mind to follow. Our brethren need to hear, time after time, the grand old themes that reveal the church as it is presented to us in the New Testament.
2. ***One will understand the warnings about corrupting the church.*** The Lord built the church as He wanted it (Mat. 16:18; Eph. 3:10–11) and He intended for it to remain faithful to His original pattern (Heb. 8:5–6). An accurate presentation of church history will emphasize countless warnings not to tamper with the Word of God, which alone is the seed from which the church of Christ is reproduced and perpetuated (Mat. 15:13; Luke 8:11; Gal. 1:7–9; et al.).
3. ***One will understand how the church was originally corrupted.*** The New Testament contains ominous predictions and signs of apostasy, even in the apostolic age (1 Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1:6; Col. 2:8–9; 2 The. 2:3–12; 1 Tim. 4:1–5; et al.). A study of church history from the second to the fifth centuries, though uninspired, clearly shows the gradual, but complete departure from the Truth, resulting in the monster of popery and Romanism. A study of the sixth through the fifteenth centuries will show one how far men can go when they ignore God's Will. A study of the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries will reveal that attempts at mere reform in religion are insufficient and profitless.
4. ***One will understand the essentiality of uncompromising restoration.*** A study of the nineteenth century will give every Truth-lover the thrill of seeing the call for restoration of the first century church. One will also learn of the tragedy wrought when those who once cried for a "thus saith the Lord" begin to ignore this fundamental principle and begin to mimic the sects

again. One will observe the same sad saga being repeated at present, and if he loves the Truth and the Christ Who died for it, will do all that he can to correct it and adhere to it.

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