

Church History Teaches

Heavenly Father, we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses who have testified boldly to the truth of your word. Help us to cherish their devotion. Inspire us by their example and the encouragement of your Spirit to speak your word lovingly and clearly in all circumstances; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Amen.

1 The Christian church is rich in history. Biblical truth is grounded in historical facts which reveal and corroborate God's activity in the world. Central to the historical nature of the faith are the activities of Jesus himself. Read 1 Cor 15:12-20, what falsehood is Paul refuting here? If Christ had not physically risen from the dead what would that mean for our faith? What, specifically, would it mean for preaching according to verse 14?

2 Christian teaching has a continuity that extends over centuries and even millennia. Christians who believe God is the author of Scripture understand that the books of the Bible have a unified purpose. What is that purpose according to Luke 24:44-49? See also John 20:30-31.

3 The Bible was written over many centuries. Great changes took place during different eras of history. God's truth is, however, changeless because Jesus is eternal, Hebrews 13:8. Read 1Cor 10:1-13, what reason does Paul give that things were written down?

4 Jesus intervened in human history, Gal 4:4-5. He also transcends time, John 1:1-2. His words are simultaneous contemporary and timeless. How can we determine which teachings of the Bible are binding for every generation? What weight should be given to historical precedent? See 1 Thess 5:21 and 2 Thess 2:15. Is there anything to suggest that Paul's teaching on the ministry applied only to the Christians of his day? Read carefully 1 Cor 14:33-38, noting especially verse 34.

5 Pastor Kriewaldt makes reference to significant figures of the church covering nearly every century up to the present. Evidence for women in the ordained ministry is completely lacking. What charge and warning does Paul give in 2 Tim 4:1-5?

6 Pastor Kriewaldt also addresses the question of whether Phoebe and/or Junia(s) could be considered apostles. Read Rom 16:7, what is Phoebe called? What does it mean? Read also Rom 16:17, maybe you noticed that some translations have 'Junias', a man, and others have 'Junia', a woman. The Greek text doesn't allow us to say definitively which is preferred. Nevertheless, male or female, there is no evidence in the Bible or the early history of the church that he/she exercised public authority in a Christian congregation.

Saviour, when this year is closing,
Marked by mercies large and free,
May we, in Thy love reposing,
Leave the future all the Thee;
Gladly in Thy courts appear,
Gladly wait Thy summons here.
(LHS 554, stanza 5)
'Ordained By God'—4

Pastor Darrin Kohrt

