

Church History - break the cycle - do we learn from the mistakes of the past, or just repeat them?

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Date: 19 April 2024

[0:00] The history of the church and what we can learn from the history of the church.

Here's some quotes about, in general, just about history itself. It says, those who are ignorant of history tend to repeat it. And so we can learn from the successes and failures of the past. They can be examples for us today. We can learn from the mistakes of others. The further back you can look, the further forward you're likely to see. So there's a sense where we can learn from the past.

That will help us with what lies ahead of us. Someone has said this. There's been no new heresies since 451. Which is one of the councils of the church. Only old heresies under different names. So there's a lot of repeating of heresies over the church history. You can see even modern cults, there's their counterparts back in church history. So it's quite interesting. In studying church history, it's really looking back at the work of God's spirit in the life of his people.

[1:20] And we think of church history, it helps us see how people in the past have understood scripture and helped formulate sound theology. And church history helps us to discern orthodoxy as well.

And discerning orthodoxy from heresy. It guards and protects the truth. And church history fills us with gratitude too. We can see how God's enabled and how he's gone before us as a church. And we look back and see the sacrifices of those that have been martyrs of old. And now we have what we have today because of their sacrifices. And it's kind of interesting.

I've got this funny quote here. How times have changed. A sermon used to be preached by the bishop who would sit down. And the congregation stood during their entire service.

So you don't have to do that tonight. So there's some things that have changed over history. Of course in the western church, they didn't have pews until the 14th century. As far as church history, there's different time divisions you could break it down into.

[2:19] And people do that in different ways. But this is how someone's put it for one example. Basically the church has got various blocks of time.

Different broad periods and had generally the same flavour to them. So you've got there the apostolic church till about 100 AD. Then you've got the persecuted church till 311 AD.

The imperial church till 476 AD. The medieval church till 1453. And the reformed church till 1648.

And then pretty much the modern church from then. That's just how someone's broken up into different history periods. So some observers look at the seven churches of Revelation.

We know about those in Revelation chapter 1. It talks about these seven churches. And some have considered that they could represent or be symbolic of the unfolding of church history.

[3:20] So there's different views about that. Some think that's really so. Others think, well, maybe not so. Or maybe it just represents kinds of churches, which could be in any kind of time period.

But, for example, how someone has seen it. The church at Ephesus. They left their first love. They thought that that could represent the apostolic age, where there was a bit of a declension, you know, decline over time.

There's Smyrna, which was the persecuted church. Some reflect that that could have been during the period of persecution under the Roman emperors. And then there's Pergamos, where Constantine basically made Christianity the religion of the state.

And there was this unholy alliance with the world and the rise of papacy. Then Thyatira, again, the popery of the Middle Ages. There's persecution there under the guise of religious seal.

Sardis, some think that could reflect the Reformation. But there was a lack of vitality. Then we see Philadelphia, the Church of Brotherly Love.

[4:23] They were faithful, faithful kind of church. Could be representing the faithful church over history that we could still be today. And then there's the Laodicean church, which is the lukewarm, self-sufficient kind of church.

So, again, these are just thoughts that people have. I'm not saying it's necessarily so. But we could see maybe some parallels there, that there is some comparison there. So, talking about the faithful church.

And just to lead in, I'm not saying tonight, because there are some odd views that they call the Baptist bride view or landmarkism, which makes more of the Baptist church than really is necessarily so.

But there are some features that we could say that we could see a link with our doctrine and practice with historic Christianity, right back to the early start of the church.

That our doctrine and practice is biblical. So, also the fact that the faithful church has existed right down through history, right from the very beginning, that we are in that kind of heritage, that we are in that same line.

[5:31] So, for example, here's some quotes here. Isaac Newton said, And another quote here.

Churches who refused to accept baptism from the Roman Catholic hierarchy or its Protestant daughters were called Anabaptists. The Anabaptists refused to accept the doctrines of infant baptism, pouring and sprinkling for baptism, and baptismal regeneration.

Baptist preachers and people were put into prison and untold numbers were put to death. They suffered persecution in England by the Church of England, in Germany by the Lutherans, in Scotland by the Church of Scotland or the Presbyterians, by the Catholics in Italy and France, and in every other place where the papacy was in power.

These ones that were faithful churches, they were practising really Baptist biblical doctrine right through history. They were never part of the apostate Roman Catholic Church.

Spurgeon said this, And of the Baptists, it may be said that they are not reformers.

[6:55] These people, comprising bodies of Christian believers known under various names in different countries, are entirely distinct and independent of the Roman and Greek churches, and have an unbroken continuity of existence from apostolic days down through the centuries.

And throughout this long period, they were bitterly persecuted for heresy, driven from country to country, disenfranchised, deprived of their property, imprisoned, tortured and slain by the thousands.

And yet they swerved not from their New Testament faith, doctrine and adherence. So that's a commentator there, William King said that. And another commentator, and these are not Baptist people here, this is some historians from the Dutch Reformed Church.

They said this, The Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community that has stood since the days of the Apostles, and as a Christian society, has preserved pure the doctrine of the Gospel through all the ages.

And here's a quote from Alexander Campbell, who founded the Christian Church or Disciples of Christ, and they're actually quite anti-Baptist. And he says, So he's again saying that the Baptist doctrine and practice has been right from the very beginning.

[8:23] This is a Quaker historian. He says, On the continent of Europe, small hidden Christian societies, who have held many of the opinions of the Anabaptists, have existed from the times of the Apostles, in the sense of the direct transmission of divine truth, and the true nature of spiritual religion, it seems probable that these churches have a lineage or succession more ancient than that of the Roman Church.

And here's a Methodist historian who says this, I should not readily admit that there was a Baptist church as far back as 100 AD, although without doubt there were Baptist churches then, as all Christians were then Baptists.

A Lutheran commentator says this, Before the rise of Luther and Calvin, there lay secreted in almost all the countries of Europe, persons who adhered tenaciously to the principles of the modern Dutch Baptists.

The origin of Baptists is lost in the remote depths of antiquity. The first century was a history of Baptists. So the point we're making here is really God helping us that the church practice and doctrine that we have is really connected with ancient, early church, apostolic days of the church. One of the questions people ask is, Well, when did the church begin? And really you could see the church was really foreshadowed in the Old Testament. And then at Pentecost it came to the fore, or it really came to fruition.

[9:49] And here's a quote about the New Testament church. The New Testament church has no denominational headquarters, no school of scholars, no board of men to control it.

God has worked down through history in men and assemblies that were local, independent and Baptist in principle. They were dissenters, independent of the Roman Catholic denominational machine, and were persecuted, often tossed to the dead.

So again, it's saying that really this truth of an autonomous, independent, Baptist kind of assembly was something that's historic.

There's a heritage that we have right back to ancient times. And so we're going to have a look through just some of the stages that we talked about of the church over the time of history.

And so right back to the beginning, the early church. So from Pentecost we see the birth of the church there in AD 29. And then right from the beginning there was lots of persecution, the death of Stephen, the conversion of Saul who became Paul, and then his missionary journeys.

[10:55] Peter was crucified 67 AD, then Paul was beheaded in 68 AD. And there was intense persecution under Nero of the early church from 64 AD.

The next period is what they call the patristic period. So the word for father in Latin is pater. So they call it the patristic period because they have these, what they call the church fathers.

And so you've got these different characters here. Clement, Polycarp, Ignatius, Barnabas. You've got Justin Martyr, Tachian, Irenaeus, Hippolytus, and Cyprian.

So these different characters were there from the early church days. And a lot of their writings are useful for us to learn about what the early church taught and the early Christian theology that was framing.

And that was called the patristic period. And when the church began, really it was just the right time for the gospel to go widespread across the world. We see that at the time there was a common language for most people in the Roman Empire because of the Greek civilization.

[12:06] There was a political stability because of the Roman Empire, so there was safe travel. And there was also a network of synagogues, so that also helped for the furtherance of the gospel as Paul and others went to synagogues and preached that Christ was the Messiah.

And there was already a way that the message could be delivered in a really convenient way. Another thing that happened, of course, was that the canon was completed and was accepted as complete in 175 AD.

So the whole 66 books were seen and accepted by the church authority. It was accepted as that was the full canon, the full scriptures. And then there was the Apostles' Creed that followed around 175 to 200 AD.

But one of the big things about the early church was there was a whole lot of persecution. And we see, for example, under Emperor Domitian, thousands were slain, thousands were killed.

And it's reckoned that Bible-believing Christians were bitterly and relentlessly persecuted. And through the Dark Ages, about 12 centuries, they've reckoned some 50 million Christians died as martyrs.

[13:24] So this is significant, isn't it? As it ramped up through the Roman emperors, Domitian was only one of them, but the persecution ramped up and then continued right through for many years ahead.

And one of the things that you notice about the persecuted church was there was actually a benefit. In that the church was purified. Persecution kept away the insincere ones.

The church was also unified in its doctrine and spirit. And it was growing as well. But then something happened in 313 AD. The Roman persecution increased and continued. But in 313 AD, Constantine, the emperor of the day, professed to be a Christian. And he signed this edict of toleration.

Basically, he repealed Christian persecution. So the persecution effectively stopped. And Constantine basically Romanised the church.

[14:35] He adopted numbers of pagan practices and ideas. And the church became very hierarchical as well. And he gave a palace to the Bishop of Rome, which led to the rise of the papacy.

And when Constantine took control, he required a lot of uniformity and control and that the pope be dominant so that he could keep control of it.

And so all these pagan practices came in and crept into the church. So the services became more splendid and less spiritual. There was a lot of art and such things. And the church became degraded.

Heathen feasts became the church festivals. There was images that began to appear around 405 AD. And they were worshipped. There was an adoration of Mary as a substitute for the worship of Venus and Diana.

And the Lord's Supper became a sacrifice, the mass, instead of a memorial. And the elder evolved from a preacher into more of a priest. So the church became very worldly and paganised.

[15:42] And it was like this marriage of the church and state, which actually weakened the church and was damaging for the church. And the purity of the church was lost. Another feature was that there were patriarchs.

So there was five leading bishops that lived in Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem and Constantinople. And again, this was a bit of a departure really from the simple New Testament pattern where it was really local churches with local preachers and elders.

And it became this hierarchical structure. And it also became quite political as well. So there was very much a political power. As we know today, the Vatican is its own country.

There's still that sentiment. The First Council of Nicaea was held in 325 AD. And they developed the Nicene Creed. So this was to address the controversy at the time.

There was the Arian controversy. So this man called Arius, he taught that Christ was not eternal, but that he was a created being. And Athanasius taught, contrary, what was biblical, that Christ was eternal and divine, just as God the Father.

[16:58] So they underlined the teaching of the Trinity, the triune Godhead. So this guy, Arius, is a light to the Jehovah's Witnesses of today. Basically, they deny that Christ is God and make him downgraded.

And so this was a good thing that they underlined that doctrine and made that clear at the time. And when you look back through history, it's quite astonishing the different doctrinal departures of Roman Catholicism from really simple biblical Christianity.

So all of these things listed here, you can't find them in the Bible at all. They just were developed over time. And it's kind of, it's strange really to think, well, some of these things of the Roman Catholic Church has only just declared it doctrine.

And even in, like as you can see there, some of the things, kissing the Pope's toe is one of the things that the Roman Catholic Church teaches.

And that was in 709, they came to that view. Transubstantiation, that the mass somehow changes into the real body and blood of Christ. Celibacy, that the priests are not to marry.

[18:09] Indulgences, which we'll talk about. Auricular confession, so confessing one's sins into the ears of a priest. That was taught and confirmed as doctrine 1215.

Sprinkling, 1311. The infallibility of the Pope. That's quite a recent one really when you look at the time scale there. That he can speak ex cathedra. When the Pope speaks at certain times, in certain occasions, that he is without error.

He cannot make any error in what he says. He has to be totally believed. He's infallible. Ex cathedra, they call it. And even the, one of the more recent doctrines is the assumption of Mary.

In 1950, so that's quite recent in the scheme of things, the Roman Catholic Church teaches that Mary ascended into heaven. Of course, it's not in the Bible, it's just what they've come to believe. So, but that's what they teach as doctrine now also, this dogma. So the church has been subject to all kinds of heresies and different sects, different false groups over time.

[19:17] So even in Paul's day, as he talks to in Galatians 1, talks about the Judaizers who were trying to take the church back to Judaism or legalism. We've seen things like Gnosticism that tried to deny the humanity of Christ.

And then the Ebionites who tried to deny the deity of Christ. There's all these other ones there as listed. So the church has constantly had this fight with these heretics, these heresies.

You could see even some of them as alike to modern day, the Montanists, who are a bit like the Charismatics with modern day revelations. And they were quite known for their false prophecies and such things.

And as we say, the Arians denied the deity of Christ like the Jehovah's Witnesses of today. So there's been this constant fight of heresy and truth right through the church ages. One of the things you notice about the church background in those days was there was this move towards this liturgical hierarchy.

So you can see as in the Roman Catholic Church, you've got the laity down the bottom, and it's got deacons, priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals and then the Pope. So this kind of hierarchical structure.

[20:26] It's not in the Bible at all. The Bible only speaks about the office of elders and deacons. There's not any of these other things that they're talking about. So there's this formality, this hierarchy that developed over time.

And then you've got monasticism. So you've got monks and monasteries and nuns and nunneries and such things. And they would emphasise that they're not to marry, which is quite unnatural and unscriptural, leads to all kinds of immorality.

So these are some of the things that the early church started to come into these phases of where the Roman Catholic Church started to exert its authority. Some of the preachers of this time, John Chrysostom was one.

He was a faithful preacher and reformer. He resisted legalism and formalism in the church. And his last words were, glory to God for all things.

He was a faithful man. Jerome was a translator of the Bible into the Latin Vulgate. Augustine was the theologian.

[21:29] He laid the groundwork for Christendom and medieval Christianity and Reformation theology. Now, some of these folk, I'm not necessarily saying that I agree with them. Some of them still would have views that we wouldn't necessarily support.

You've got Patrick who went to Evangelised Ireland in about AD 370 and he was actually more of a Baptist, more of a Bible believer than a Roman Catholic when you actually look at what he actually taught which is quite interesting because obviously he's looked up to us as they would reckon him St. Patrick.

But actually, he's more of a Bible-believing Christian and he actually took the Gospel to Ireland.

Then we go into the next period of time. It's called the Middle Ages or the Medieval period and at this time the barbarians ran amok through what we call Europe and North Africa.

There was a lot of destruction. There was a rise of persecution and then Islam started to come to the fore as well. There was severe persecution from Muslims against Christians as well and Jerusalem fell to the Muslim Caliph Omar in AD 637.

One group at the time was the Paulicians and they were separate from the state church. They accepted only the Bible as authoritative. A hundred thousand of them were martyred and they rejected the worship of Mary and the saints and the cross and the Catholic mass.

[22:54] So there were these faithful ones that sought to be more biblical in what they practiced and the conduct they had. One of the features of this time was the Crusades.

It was a bit of a military effort by the Roman Catholic Church at the time really where they had great armies and they were quite tyrannical in some of the things that they did as much as they were trying to reclaim the Holy Land but they actually were quite vicious as well and they sought to exterminate the Waldenses and the Albigenses which are Bible believing Christians basically. So they did a lot of damage as well so it wasn't all a good thing at all. So as far as the Waldensians they preached from and circulated the scriptures they opposed the doctrines of Rome they were also called the Lollards and John Wycliffe also connected with them he taught the sole authority of the scriptures salvation from God alone the Lord's Supper not transubstantiation he opposed indulgences and idols and the priesthood and he translated the New Testament into English and he was declared a heretic because the Roman Catholic Church they didn't want the Bible to be in the language of the common people they wanted to keep it just in Latin.

Then we've got John Huss he was a faithful preacher of good doctrine and he upheld the Bible as the authority versus papal authority and John Huss was burnt at the stake in 1415 and the ones who followed him the Hussites were virtually wiped out by the Inquisition so there was a lot of brutality at the time and the Albigenses they're another group they also repudiated the authority of tradition like the Roman Catholic Church exalted tradition as if that was something you couldn't dare speak against but really tradition can be contested it's not always true and the Albigenses they circulated the New Testament they opposed some of the false doctrines of the Roman Catholic system like purgatory image worship the priestly claims they were virtually wiped out Jerome Savonarola was a Dominican monk and he preached against the social ecclesiastical and political evils of his day he was another one who was excommunicated he was tortured martyred burnt at the stake one of the features at the time was indulgences and indulgences were a way the common people could pay money to the Roman

Catholic Church to have some mass said or some way that they could get some benefit from the Roman Catholic Church such that their loved ones who passed away and were in purgatory could have their sentence of time shortened while they were in purgatory really it was a money making racket from the Roman Catholic Church of the day under this guise of somehow giving some spiritual benefits so all these poor people are there pouring in their coins into the coffers of the priests of the day it's just a great scam of the time and that was called indulgences and they still have indulgences today in the Roman Catholic Church in some measure and you can still as far as I know if one of your loved ones passes away you go to a mass and you can pay money and there's some benefit that your loved one will get from what you pay to the church so it's quite a falsehood it's totally unbiblical another thing that happened was the invention of the printing press

[26:19] Johann Gutenberg in 1455 made possible the printing of books and this meant really the Bible being the first one could be distributed widely so when the Bible started to be translated into other languages other than Latin it could be rapidly printed out and put in the hands of the common people before the printing press the Bible would cost the wages of a working man for a year because they had to be written out by hand arduously written out and so now because of the printing press the circulation of the Bible could be made and also sermons and tracts and writings about doctrine and truth so it helped to really publicise sound doctrine and publicise the word of God so everyone could get their hands on it and that then became a big threat to the papal church because people were starting to read what the Bible actually says one of the scholars of the time was called

Erasmus and he was a relentless critic of the Roman church and he was the one who produced the first printed text of the Greek New Testament so this became a great help to Bible translators that had the Greek New Testament such that they could then translate that into other languages and get it straight from that original writing Martin Luther came to light then in 1517 he nailed 95 theses or statements to the door of the Wittenberg Cathedral and he wrote these statements that really struck at the authority of the Pope and the priesthood and he was excommunicated in 1520 Luther translated the Bible into German and he taught grace through faith only now Luther still had some matters that he still didn't quite fully extricate himself from some of the false ideas of the Roman church but at least he did stand against the corruption of the church of his day and he did obviously did a lot of good in starting to get the wheels turning that people could stand against the

falsehood of the Roman church of the day so then the reformation really started to take effect there now just to kind of put the balance here that some of these folk you know as much as they were reformers they still had some things that were they had their own faults and failings too really talking honestly so people like Luther Zwingli and Calvin they would not allow any view but their own so they were even persecuting other Bible believing Christians which is kind of sad really isn't it that they actually did do some harm themselves to other Christians so they weren't all in a positive light Luther was brought before the

Diet of Worms it was basically a gathering place at this place called Worms and the Emperor of Germany asked him to retract what he had written but he said he would not unless it was disproved by scripture or reason and so he maintained his stand he stood firm there's a group called the Anabaptists that we could see there in around 1523 they insisted on believers baptism so in other words not infant baptism so the Roman church would routinely baptise as they would say infants so little babies they would sprinkle them and they would call that baptism that kind of christening they would call that baptism but the bible tells us clearly that we believe and are baptized it's it's believers baptism and that's what these ones taught these anabaptists and they were kind of called anabaptists anab meaning again that they were baptizing people again so the Roman Catholics considered that they were re-baptizing adults who then professed faith in christ so and so they would they call them anabaptists as a kind of derogatory term that they're baptizing people again but actually they're really just baptizing people scripturally when you believe you get baptized so and so they were quite harshly persecuted too they insisted on believers baptism they rejected the idea of a state church and they had a lot of sound doctrine teaching that they had so but they were quite severely attacked the anabaptists which we would call ourselves the same as them pretty much in 1530 there was a confession of faith this is the Lutheran Augsburg confession so again just a way of tabulating doctrine and putting it in some format and then the council of Trent from the Roman Catholic church was at the time in 1546 the apocrypha was added to the canon so they added all these extra books to the

[31:44] Bible so some of the features some of the characters of the day Ulrich Zwingli he broke with Rome in 1517 he was a Swiss reformer he was more radical than Luther so he came more out of the Catholic church than Luther did he saw that the Lord Supper and baptism were symbolic ceremonies but on the downside he would say about Baptists they shall be seized and forthwith without mercy be drowned so if he found anyone who was practicing believers baptism like we would today as much as he wasn't a Roman Catholic he would kill them by drowning and that's the man sadly that he was next character there John Calvin he published the Institutes of Christian Religion so he formed these theological writings!

made a significant contribution to theology of course we would differ from him on a number of which we'll talk about at another time he was more of a politician than a theologian really and he was very intolerant as well of dissent he was quite harsh and cruel there was a dissenter that he organised to be burnt at the stake for example just because basically he had a different theology than him so again certainly a downside as much as he did some good the next group is the Jesuits so this is a Roman Catholic monastic order and their principal aim when they were formed was to fight the Protestant movement that was why they were formed and they were founded by this fellow Ignatius Loyola and then Francis Xavier was another man who founded the modern Catholic foreign mission so the Roman Catholics got a bit of a head start on the other churches because they were quite active in taking the

Roman Catholic views to other countries one of the big things about church history is what's called the Inquisition so there's the Spanish Inquisition but there was the world where multitudes were tortured and burnt and there's this active persecution and it heated up really from around 1215 so there was thousands and thousands of Christians were slain Jews as well they were very brutal it was very horrific you can get a book called Fox's Book of Martyrs which can give you some of the examples of brutal tortures and awful things that were done to people and saying recant and it's just awful what they did to Bible believers just like you and me just because we didn't conform to the state religion of the day so very sad time indeed in England there was further reformation happening there people like

Thomas Cramner and he along with Hugh Latimer and Nicholas Ridley they were burnt at the stake in London in 1555 1556 so again there was brutal persecution of Bible believing Christians William Tyndale he made the first English translation in 1525 and really it was a real forerunner for the King James Bible so it was wonderful for the people of England to have the Bible at least the New Testament in their language in their own language Henry the eighth in England he broke from the Roman church really just for his own benefit so he could divorce his wife the Roman church wouldn't allow him to have the divorce and so he made himself the head of the English Catholic church so it was really quite a devious thing really but

I suppose on the positive side he did do some good things he had the Bible translated into English and published and placed in the hands of the common people but you can see some of these things that we just touched on so far there's a whole history here of different characters different doctrines and movements and a mixture of good and bad even the ones that stood for the right they had some measures that they weren't always standing strongly or biblically they weren't always really exercising Christian character or what we would consider the right thing to do and so they really were doing a lot of damage which is very sad and the next one is John Knox he brought about some radical changes so John Knox he was in Scotland and he brought about the Presbyterian church there and John Knox he did a lot of good things he challenged!

[36:37] the authority Catholic aligned people and they were just slaughtered by the state church so this is the kind of persecution that went on back then it's kind of horrific really isn't that to think about so this is the reformation we've seen the reformation period where some of these things were starting to be challenged and some of the principles of the reformation are that really it was scriptural it was founded on it changed into the actual the real body and blood of

Christ really it's not logical it's not conceivable really that that should be the case let alone scripturally so and also these papal indulgences so this idea of buying less time in purgatory by giving money to the church the superstitious image worship where they were bowing down and worshipping images so the reformation contested that and withstood that and there was what was called the iconoclasm too where some of the reformers would go into churches and tear down all the images and the icons and the crucifixes and all of the embellishments and the finery and the gold and silver chalices and what not that just become objects of worship and they would destroy them because they'd become a distraction really that took away from the glory of God so another thing about the reformation is it was personal so it was pointing worshippers to God in prayer the giver of pardon and grace it was bringing people more into that personal relationship with God the reformation was spiritual in that the reformers emphasized the inward rather than the outward so it was more about your heart rather than putting on a show or putting on a spectacle and the reformation also have this sense where it gave more national freedom such that the people could read the scriptures in their own language so the common people who couldn't speak Latin they could actually read the Bible they could read the word of God for themselves in their own native language so these are some of the features of the reformation which were really good one of the preachers of the time John Bunyan he was a Baptist preacher in England and he spent 12 years in the Bedford jail where he wrote Pilgrim's Progress and John Bunyan he was persecuted by the state church which was the Anglican church the church of England of his time just because he wasn't an authorised preacher they didn't allow him to go preaching without him being consigned or commissioned by the state church of his day so just purely the fact that he wanted to preach the

Bible freely to people that wanted to hear it he was put in jail for that that's the kind of mentality of the day good thing that happened of course the King James Bible was published in 1611 so we've got the word of God now clearly in our own language and then what happened the Reformation period came to close with a bloodbath really in what was called the 30 Years War and we entered really what's called the modern church movement one of the groups there was the Puritans the Puritans they emphasised spiritual application and experience so they tried to be much more biblical in what they believed and practiced and they had two groups of them there was the Presbyterian and the Congregational so this group they were against outward ceremony symbols and decoration but they might have veered on the other side that became very plain and austere Oliver Cromwell was a strict Puritan he was one of the ones that was involved with the iconoclasm

where they basically tore down statues and icons and images in their own Catholic churches and then we got the Mayflower they carried 102 pilgrims to establish a colony in America one group the Scottish Covenanters they were in Scotland they paid the price in blood for their faith 18,000 Scots were killed just for standing up for more biblical teachings than the state church of the day they called the Scottish Covenanters another character of the time was Count Zinzendorf and he invited exiled Protestants to settle on his estate and he began the Moravian missionary movement so he did some Moravians another character is Jonathan Edwards he was a theologian and he was one who was involved in the great awakening he was good at exhorting people and preaching and sound doctrine by and large so another good influence on the world at the time Jonathan Edwards another thing that happened was the

[42:37] Methodist revival where at the time the churches in England at the time they become very formal and cold and in decline and John Wesley he saw the need for a living faith with a conversion experience and for himself in 1738 he records how his heart felt strangely warmed he came to faith in Christ he came to that personal faith and then he commissioned some lay preachers to help reach Britain and the American colonies and so Wesley he was another one who was persecuted!

Anglican church they shut him out such that he had to start preaching outside he used to be preaching inside Anglican churches but they found him too controversial and so he was forced to go preaching outside so he started preaching in the fields and he met with much opposition many attempts were made on his life but when he was preaching in the fields he was able to reach thousands and thousands of people so that began what's called the Methodist revival so God actually used that that he was shut out of the formal state church the national church the church of England where he was and he was able to take the gospel out to the common folk and did a lot of good with that and another open air preacher was George Whitfield he was also shut out of the Anglican church and he took the gospel outdoors sometimes with crowds of up to 8,000 people and he again was often attacked by mobs so it seems like this common thread of getting persecuted getting attacked for your faith and this was again one of the things that happened then a bit closer to our time is the modern missionary movement of course which continues today where people got the burden to take the gospel to other nations so people like

William Kerry some have called him the father of missions he took the gospel to India William Kerry in 1793 then you got Robert Morrison went to China Robert Moffat to Africa there's preacher Groves to Persia Houston to Africa and Hudson Taylor then formed the China Inland Mission as well so this modern missionary movement started there and was able to take the gospel far and wide and still happening today of course isn't it then you got people like Charles Finney conducted some revivals he had some views a bit out there too but at least he again was part of some manifest preaching activity and holiness teaching the brethren movement began in Dublin in 1827 but there's some false cults too we see for example in the 1800s you've got numbers of them that came to light Mormonism Seventh-day Adventism Spiritualism they called it Russellism which is Jehovah's Witnesses Christian Science these all came to fruition in the 1800s there we're still seeing the fruit of them today doing much damage such false teaching that's out there today then around the same time 1859 you had Darwin put out the origin of species so evolution was another thing that came at that time but there's people preaching in one way or another faithfully C.H. Spurgeon he preached for the first time in a 6,000 seat metropolitan tabernacle in 1861 you've got William Booth who formed the Salvation Army he was used to getting mobbed and pelted with eggs and bad fish apparently and then D.L.

[46:19] Moody he addressed some 100 million people in his lifetime preaching the gospel worldwide so there's some preaching going on as the word of God was going out in different ways through different people and then in 1900 Pentecostalism came about Pentecostalism I'd like to reserve some time to speak to this in more detail at another session because I think it warrants probably a whole night on Pentecostalism to go through some of the chequered history of Pentecostalism and that started around 1900 and a fellow Charles Parham had a Bible school in Topeka Kansas and one of his students Agnes Osman began to speak in tongues so she claimed in 1901 and it's kind of interesting you see on the screen there that's

not only did they speak in tongues but they wrote in tongues too so and they that's that's their writing in tongues that's apparently writing in Chinese unfortunately no Chinese person has been able to interpret that that writing as yet it's yet to be interpreted so you know it's laughable really it's kind of sad but yeah not only did they have speaking in tongues but for some time they thought they were writing in tongues too as the spirit kind of you know just put the pen to the paper and I guess close your eyes and just do the scribbles and somehow miraculously that's Chinese language apparently but yet it's not ever been seen to be such a language at all in fact it just looks like scribble on a piece of paper so but enough said about that you know by 1905 there's 25,000 Pentecostal believers and about 60 preachers and then Azusa Street happened in 1906 I want to talk to these things in more detail because I think it's justified to really give you a thorough look at it because I know there's so much false teaching out there that springs from

Pentecostalism and when you look at the Pentecostal pioneers it's quite an eye opener when you see the credentials of the Pentecostal pioneers the ones who started that movement you actually see what it's founded on the founders of the movement so hold your breath for that one we'll do that at another time and of course then we see through history you've got the World Council of Churches was formed in 1948 Billy Graham 1949 there's lots of things that have happened ever since through the 1900s through the 2000s so we won't labour that just now but hopefully I've given you enough to give you a bit of an appetite to maybe dig deep and do your own research I know we've really only just glossed over many of these characters and you could spend weeks and weeks on this stuff really could have hundreds of lectures on this stuff and go into fine detail about all of these characters and there's more many more important characters through church history that we haven't even talked about we haven't even named them let alone talked about what they've achieved and how the Lord's used them and of course in the same light how the enemy's done a lot of damage through false teaching and false ideas through the Roman Catholic Church through the Anglican Church through the Pentecostal Church there's lots of things that sadly there's been false teaching come and go and stay with us really as well it's very sad there's really a checkered history through the church history of false movements and heresies and I suppose the bottom line is can we get back to the Bible can we try to be biblical such that we look back to where it began where the church began the early church where they had really a simple gathering place it was really gathering simply coming to the word of God to hearing it preached to having really not some big hierarchy or some denominational HQ or some kind of system of government of preachers over preachers over preachers basically it's a self governing local church body that's accountable to the congregation that there is that bodily unity at the local level such that we're accountable to the word of

God and God helping us that's what we want to be such that we can be back to more what was the primitive early church practice and doctrine so God helping us that's what we want to have and see through history how when Constantine kind of absorbed the church into the state and brought all these heathen pagan practices it polluted and damaged the church and it corrupted it and weakened it so we want to really let go church had in the context of biblical Christianity so hopefully you've got some thoughts about that we might we'll break for questions in a minute but we'll just might close this time in prayer Lord we thank you that we can come to your word and know your truth and Lord help us to have biblical practice and doctrine we pray Lord that we'd learn from the examples of the past both good and bad as we see even the ones who stood for truth they still had their faults and failings too Lord help us Lord to see at warts and all and to recognize what's right and what's wrong and to be exhorted to biblical truth and doctrine

[51:58] Lord we pray help us to learn from the history that we've heard and rather to have really that right standing that will stand in those that have stood for truth and will avoid the errors of those that did not stand for truth we pray Lord that you guide us and lead us by your Holy Spirit in Jesus name Amen