

Church History Series - Part 1

by Mike Attwood

Mike Attwood's sermon emphasizes the importance of studying church history to inspire transformation and maintain a faithful perspective in contemporary Christianity.

Duration: 41:44

Scripture: Hebrews 12:1

Topics: "Church History", "Love for Christ"

Description

Mike Attwood emphasizes the significance of studying church history, urging believers to reflect on the past to understand their present faith. He highlights the dangers of becoming merely knowledgeable without transformation, stressing the importance of maintaining a love relationship with Jesus amidst church activities. Attwood encourages the congregation to learn from historical figures and events, recognizing that small deviations in faith can lead to significant consequences over time. He also warns against the rise of clericalism and the need for humility in leadership, reminding everyone that Christ should always hold the preeminent place in the church.

Transcript

Okay, let's just begin by asking help from the Lord for this session. Just bow our heads, quieten our hearts for a second. Father, we just want to acknowledge how dependent we are upon the help of the Spirit of God to work during this week in all of our lives.

We recognize the danger we're in, in a sense, that there is a sense in which knowledge can puff up, and we don't want to be just heady people with lots of information, but our longing is for transformation, that we'd be more like your Son and less like ourselves, and that people would see something of the Lord Jesus in us. So we just look to thee to help and bless and encourage us from the Scriptures and from the things that we think about this evening in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Just a couple of things to begin with before we open the Scriptures.

One of the things that's interesting, we heard about Mr. McClure and how these conferences, you didn't even know who was going to turn up and what they were going to speak on, but they had a message from God. And one of the things that I find difficult is going to places where you have to give your subject way in advance. I'm going to Singapore, and when you go there, they want to know every message.

It's almost like they want you to preach the message before you get there. I mean, they're just so administratively heavy. I said to one of the brothers, you tell me when to breathe in and breathe out.

You might as well put that on the schedule as well. You've got everything else figured out. Well, I'm saying all that to say this, that when I set off this morning, I was going to speak on Acts.

When I landed here, I'm not going to speak on Acts, okay? Because I do believe the Spirit of God can change your convictions about what you should speak on. And so, forgive me if you came so excited about Acts, you're not going to get Acts. In fact, when you hear it, you're going to say, oh boy, we're going to speak on church history.

You hear the silence? All week long, we're going to look at church history. Now, let me ask you a question. How many of you have ever heard a series on the history of the in your assembly? That's what I figured, okay? And of course, maybe an assembly is not the place to do it.

I don't know. This is maybe a good setting to do something like this. But Randy talked about the idea of looking back.

I think that would be a good exercise this week, to look back. You see, I want to just put it in, couch it in these terms just for a second. I know time travel is not real, okay? Anybody, you've heard about time travel, you know? So, I want you to just imagine, Secundus and Gaius in the New Testament, they kind of discover time travel.

And they land in British Columbia from the New Testament era, New Testament church, and they land in British Columbia in 2019. And for six months, they go and visit churches in Vancouver and all these different places. And I wonder what they would think.

Having traveled from the New Testament era, landing in our day, and just going around visiting churches, I think some of them would say this, how did they ever get there from here, right? And it's interesting, when you're traveling, and now we're not talking time traveling, I'm just talking general traveling. But if you get a bit off on your direction, if you're not going far, it doesn't make much difference. But if you go on a long distance, if you're a little bit off, carry that along the way, you're going to be a long way off.

And we're going to see throughout the history of the church, little twists, little turns, 2,000 years down the pike, mean huge differences. And hopefully when we look at the history of the church, one of the reasons we're going to do this is we're going to see why it's so important to get back to the simplicity of the New Testament church. And how easy it is for us, because of the world we find ourselves in, to be influenced by things that are clearly deviant and wrong.

But they're so acceptable in our day, that we just kind of don't even think about it. So that's what our exercise is. Now, let's just look at Hebrews 12, just for a second, just by way of introduction.

We're going to weave a lot of scripture in to this as well. It's going to be not just church history, but Hebrews 12, one and two. Wherefore, seeing we also are compassed about, with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Just stop there, as our reading is concerned. Just gone through chapter 11, if we were reading kind of consecutively, and there are those that have gone before, and that have run the race, and they've run it well. And the idea is that that race now is being passed on, it's our turn.

And so, one thing that we need to do is, in successfully running the race, is keep our eyes on the Lord Jesus. That's a great place to look, because when we look at some of the people in church history, God used them amazingly, but boy, some of them were rough diamonds. Far from perfect individuals, right? So, let's say we keep our eyes on the Lord Jesus.

But the idea is this, that so often in scripture, the writers do take us back. They do take us back and show us people of the past to inspire us to run our race. So, that's why he goes and talks about all these heroes, and even the heroes in Hebrews 11.

Would you have put Samson in there? I'm not sure I would have done. God did, right? The inspired scripture has Samson in there. For all his faults and failings, he's in there.

And so, we just want to recognize this importance of looking back, learning. And so, I'm going to give you some reasons, seven reasons why it's important to study church history. Number one, it's very humbling.

In this sense, that an English preacher called Martin Lloyd-Jones, in his day, he was filling Westminster Chapel in London on Friday nights, on Sunday morning and evening. And the amazing thing was, it was a day and age where you had to have bells and whistles. We think it's just our day that he had to have bells and whistles to attract a crowd.

Well, that was the mentality in his day, too. You had to have big choirs and all kinds of things, you know, kind of things to entertain. And he just preached the word.

That was it. In fact, they said he was kind of a Puritan of his day, you know, just would preach and often preach for over an hour on one verse. And yet, people flocked in.

And it would be very easy for him to get a big head. Look at the success that I have. And he would say, after speaking on the Sunday, he would go home and he would read the journals of George Whitefield.

And he said, I felt like I've done nothing when he read about the labors of George Whitefield. And it had a way of keeping him humble. And sometimes you read about these men of the past and their labors and you feel like I've done nothing for them all.

Right. So it really does kind of put things in perspective. It's very helpful to do that.

Secondly, church history can make you a real optimist. Because as you look at the history of the church, there's times when it seemed like testimony was hanging by a tiny thread. After the French Revolution, they were boasting, men like Voltaire, that Christianity was finished.

And it seemed like it was. Britain was a desperate place. And then a fellow called John Wentworth and George Whitefield began to preach.

And the whole atmosphere of the British Isles changed. Even though prior to that, these were really dark days. And we'll talk about how dark they were when we get there.

We don't want to jump too far ahead. But that tells me something. That sometimes when we think things are at their very darkest, that you wonder, is God ever going to do anything in a day like today? God may just have his Wesleyan Whitefield today that he's going to raise up to turn the tide in our generation.

So it does make you an optimist. And it's really encouraging. And I spend a lot of time reading church history.

And I find it keeps me pumped. It keeps me excited. It keeps me fired up when I read about these things.

I really appreciate it. Another thing that church history teaches you is there's no new thing under the sun. So when the Jehovah's false witnesses come and knock on your door, well, they're not a new idea.

They go back to a fellow called Arius. They're the modern day followers of Arianism. Right? And we'll see that.

The charismatic movement, it's not a new thing. There was a group called the Montanists. They were doing the same thing back in the early days of Christianity.

See, Satan doesn't really have any new ideas. He keeps churning up the old ones over and over again. And so it kind of gives you a perspective on things.

It can be very helpful to look at some of these things. And then number four, God uses unlikely and often eccentric people. For instance, you've all heard of George Muir.

I bet you didn't know that he put his head in a bucket of ice water every morning when he got out of bed. That's weird, isn't it? Anybody else use that here? Right? These were strange. Robert Chapman took an ice bath every morning and a hot bath every night before he went to sleep.

Lived to 99 years of age. Maybe there's something good in that, I don't know. Right? But some of these people were really strange.

I mean, they had some strange ideas even, some of them. God uses unlikely people. And probably lesson number five kind of linked, the best of men are men at best.

John Nelson Darby, his closest friend, William Kelly, said this of Mr. Darby. Lloyd-Jones called the great John Nelson Darby. William Kelly said, I never saw the two natures more evident in one person.

Right? Here's this man that God used greatly, but his best friend said, you can see the two natures really evident in his life. So that's it. That's an encouragement.

If God can use John Nelson Darby, maybe he can use some of us in the same way. Sixth thing to say about church history is that it's his story. And I think if you just put this at the back of it all, despite the individuals and despite all the things that happened, the promise still stands true.

I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I find that so encouraging. Even to this day, it's encouraging to me.

And because he will build his church, it really, it's not really dependent on me. He's going to do it. Now he likes to use human instruments, but if we're not going to cooperate, he'll find somebody else.

I will build my church. And it's good to be aware of that and to be conscious of that. And then maybe another aspect, just look at Ephesians four.

I was just meditating on this verse yesterday. Ephesians four. As we look at church history together, Ephesians four, verse four, there is one body.

Just that little phrase, there's one body. Comprising of every true born-again believer, from the day of Pentecost to the rapture, there's only one body. And when I look at Whitfield and Wesley, even though I don't agree with everything that they believed or preached, but yet I feel a kinship.

These are my brothers, right? I'm going to be in glory with these men, right? And I feel a sense that I'm part of something a lot bigger than just the group that are here or even the assemblies that are in this country. I'm part of something much bigger, something magnificent that Christ is building. And we're part of this.

And I just find that so encouraging to this one body that we're part of. And so these are just some encouraging ideas in my mind of reasons why it's good to study church history. Now, I'd like you to look at Revelation.

Now, we're going to look at Revelation two and three, and we're going to use them as a basis. And as we do this, I realize some people are going to have an issue with this. And so let me just say that when I look at Revelation two and three, I believe there's three ways you can look at these letters.

One is that you can look at them as they were originally intended, which is letters to real churches that existed at a real time from the Lord Jesus, right? So it's just like any other letter, like Ephesians, Colossians, or whatever. They're just letters to churches. And we're reading somebody else's mail, in a sense, right? These letters.

And they're very helpful in that natural sense in which they were given. But another way of looking at them, too, is that, you see, there were more than seven churches in Asia Minor. Colossae was in Asia Minor.

Hierapolis was in Asia Minor. And yet he didn't write to them at this point, right? He wrote to Laodicea. But the two neighboring churches are not mentioned.

So in other words, there's more churches. So this seven, you could look at it as maybe a batch sample that would reflect on the condition you might find in any church. And I think that it does give you a clue of that, doesn't it? That you could, if you look at our world today, there are places in the world where it's just like Smyrna.

Persecution. In North Korea, I would think the letter to Smyrna would be really encouraging to the Christians there, wouldn't it? Because they're going through it right now, experiencing it. And yet there's a worldly church that's rich and increased with goods and feels like it needs nothing.

Can you relate to any church like that? Yeah, I think we can, can't we? North America 101. Right? So there's a sense in which these churches reflect what you might find at any time in the history of the church. And yet others have said that there's a third way you can look at it, and that is that these churches seem to suggest a church history curriculum written in advance.

Because, in a sense, God knows the end from the beginning, doesn't he? Like, none of the twists and turns in the history of the church came as a surprise to him. And T. Ernest Wilson, a great Bible teacher, the one that I had the privilege of meeting, a godly, godly man, but he said that if you want to really get a good grasp on the kind of structure of your Bible, he said you should look at the Seventh Feast of Jehovah, which gives you an overview of Israel's history from its inception to its terminus. And then you should look at the seven kingdom parables, books of the kingdom, and just what happens to the kingdom once the king is rejected.

And he said you should look at the seven churches and see God's prophetic view of what was going to happen in the church. He said if you get those three things down, you've got a really good structure of understanding the scriptures. So we're going to kind of take a leaf out of this book and look at it from that perspective.

So let's look at Revelation chapter 2 just for a second. And as we consider this curriculum in advance, we want to start looking at the first church tonight. We won't get very far, but we'll make an attempt anyway.

Ephesus. And I'm going to suggest to you that from a, I'm only going to look at it from a historical perspective. I'm not going to do the other two sides of it because we're just doing church history.

But it's been suggested that this looks at Pentecost to the rapture. And let me, by the way, just let me just read a quote from the guy. He says, I have no doubt that this series of churches applies as history to the moral successive state of the whole church.

The first four to the history of the church from its first decline to its present condition in Popery. Okay. So the first four from its inception decline to its present position in Popery.

And then he says the final three are the history of Protestantism. That's kind of interesting. And anyway, so let's just consider this.

First of all, this, this church, let's look. First of all, it says to the angel of the church at Ephesus, write these things, say he that holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. I know your works and your labor and patience.

You can't bear them, which are evil and has tried them, which say they're apostles and are not and has found them liars. And so the first thing that we want to point out is that this is the only one of the seven churches that mentions apostles. It mentions it in context of false apostles, but you're more likely to have false apostles when you have real apostles.

Right. It was the implication is that this is written at a time when the apostles were still around and this church at Ephesus, there were others going around claiming that they were apostles like the original apostles, but they were detected as liars and found to be false. Okay.

So it's really speaking about the, the early days we'd say from really Pentecost to a hundred AD that that's the period we're thinking about. And, um, what we find about this church is that it was, there's a lot of work going on. There's a lot of, uh, rapid gospel expansion and, and really in the early days of Christianity, uh, because we started at Pentecost, there was this, there's this tremendous, uh, rapid expansion.

And let me just explain what I mean by that in the first, really from Pentecost to a hundred AD, uh, the church, um, uh, just, uh, seem to just go, uh, incredibly far, incredibly quickly. Uh, so for instance, uh, went

long before North Africa. Now think about this North Africa.

If you think of North Africa today, what do you think of? I'm thinking place like Algeria, Morocco. What comes to your first thought in your mind? Muslim. 80% of North Africa was Christian.

Isn't that amazing? And look at it now. Now what does it tell you? That it's possible to have a place that was once saturated with the gospel is now totally dominated by Islam. There's a guy from England that scares the life out of me because I can see that happening there and France and most in Europe, Germany, Lutheran Germany, right? How did that happen? How could you go from 80% Christian North Africa to where it is today? Turkey, these seven churches are all in Turkey.

What is it now? Muslim. That incredible. Uh, France, the gospel had gone as far as France are, as it was then known goal.

So just to give you an idea, uh, and that's why the emphasis on this, their work and their labor, uh, there was a lot of hard work going on in terms of sharing the gospel. And, and, uh, so give you an example, uh, in a hundred AD, uh, it had gone from 120 people in the upper room to 0.0017% of the population at approximately 10,000 Christians. By you get to 300 AD, 10.5% of the population are 6 million claimed to be Christian.

That's pretty rapid, isn't it? Now there are reasons for that. Let me just think of why was it such a time of rapid gospel expansion? One of the things about the birth of Christ was it was in the fullness of time, God sent forth his son. And, uh, in, in the sense that, uh, the Roman empire had a magnificent road system, perfect for spreading the gospel.

In fact, uh, you go to Scotland and you can walk on Roman road right up to Hadrian's wall, still there to this day. They were pretty good engineers, straight as a dot, still there. I've walked on it.

Right. So, so, so they all across the empire, they had built roads. So it was just perfect for the spread of the gospel.

Alexander the great and all his conquests had made Greek the language of business. And so the Greek language, perfect for spreading the gospel, the Romans, uh, the Pax Romana, the Roman peace, right? It was a military dictatorship, but it meant it was pretty safe to travel on the roads too, because there was general peace throughout the empire. And then there's another aspect to this massive spread of the gospel.

And that was that there was a great spiritual hunger. People were disillusioned with Greek philosophy and they were disillusioned with paganism. It just was bankrupt.

It hadn't satisfied. So there's this great spiritual vacuum. There's the roads, there's the language, and then there are people that understand the great commission and understand their responsibility to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

And so the ordinary person just gossiped the gospel and it spread dramatically throughout the empire. And so it was a time of great, great expansion, thrilling, thrilling time, really. And, uh, and yet it's interesting as you look at this, uh, assembly, working hard, um, discerning count there, those, uh, that are, that are evil.

Those that say they're apostles are not. You found them liars, uh, born in patience. And for my name's sake is labor and is not fainted.

So a time of great hard work, but there's one thing that maybe we might not see, but the Lord saw, and he says, I've got something against you. It's lost the first love. And isn't it interesting that a time of great labor and sometimes activity can be a poor substitute for intimacy.

And those we can be busy, busy, busy, so busy that we actually don't have time to sit at his feet. Right. And just enjoy his presence and, and, and, uh, for us to just be so active.

And yet, uh, our love for him is diminishing in the midst of all the, we're still doing the same things. And, and that's a danger. You see, yeah.

Randy's talking about the, the being gathered, uh, to a place and, and yet we can, we can do everything right and have every principle in place. And I, I, again, I passionately believe in these principles, but we can do it out of almost a mechanical rote going through the motions. And the Lord says, no, do you love me? If you love me, keep my commandments, right? Uh, you want to care for my flock, uh, brothers, uh, Simon, son, son Jonah, do you love me? If you do care for what I love.

And so it's possible. And we just want to see these little things, little twists and turns along the way are going to have big effects down the pike. And for us, we could just say tonight, it's good to begin this week by asking how is your love relationship with the Lord Jesus? I'm not asking how busy you are.

Some of you have got really busy schedules. Some of you are really busy in God's work, but how's your love relationship? You love him more than you did this time last year. I mean, are you growing in your love relationship with the Lord Jesus? Do you just love to sit at his feet? And see, this is so critical, isn't it? We need to understand this.

Um, anyway, they, they certainly managed to keep heresy largely at bay during this period, but there was something that the Lord saw, not only that they left their first love, but he also mentioned something in verse six, this thou hast that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. And so I want to just talk about the rise of the Nicolaitans. Now, again, I know that there's difference of opinion and some say they were followers of Nicholas of Antioch and they were kind of immoral people and all the rest of it.

Um, uh, I don't want to go into all the technicalities of that, but I don't believe that for one second. I believe that the word itself is a perfect description of what's going on. Nicaeo, uh, is the idea.

It's one of the key words in the book of revelation. You get our word Nike from it. You know, you put those runners on it.

You can run the race, even if you're overweight, right? Victory. That's the idea. Conquer victory.

And because the book of revelation did, sorry, Mikey, where are you? You got this commentary. I hope I'm getting all this stuff right. He's got this commentary here.

You can check it on this commentary, but, but key word in revelation is, is Nike victory and Jesus is the victor. That's the whole point, right? Isn't it wonderful that he's the victor, that he wins. But, but in this context, uh, Nike, and then you've got layoffs, which means the people.

And the idea is that people were conquering the people. They were, they were pushing down the people in order to elevate themselves. And so you've got this rise of this clerical class.

If you like the clergy laity system beginning to occur early, early on in Christianity. Now we already see it in scripture. Just let's just look a couple of scriptures, uh, three John.

Uh, I know we're very familiar with these things. And by the way, I have no idea what time I'm supposed to, I should've brought my, what time is this supposed to end? 825. Okay.

830. Okay, good. Good.

Uh, three John, uh, versus nine and 10. And you know all this already, but, um, it's just, it's just interesting to see it as it began to have an impact on the life of the church. And so he says, I wrote unto the church, but diatrophies who love us to have the preeminence among them receive with us not wherefore if I come, I'll remember that his deeds, which he do with praying against us with malicious words, not content therewith, neither does he himself received the brethren and forbid them that would and cast us them out of the church.

So, so here's a man and it's just amazing. It says he loves us to have the preeminence. Now there's a problem with that.

And the problem is this, that God has already determined who is to have the preeminence in the church. In Washington's one, 18, that in all things, he, the Lord Jesus might have the preeminence, right? But here's a man that wants to usurp the place of Christ in the church. And in the process, what he does is that he, he runs everybody else down, prays against us with malicious words.

In other words, he blackens everybody else's character in order to elevate his own. And he doesn't receive the visiting preachers because they're a threat. You see, they might just expose him.

And so he won't have people like John come around. And so, so this is it. Now, I just want to show you how this happened in terms of the church.

And again, it was little, little changes. So Ignatius of Antioch lived AD 35 to AD 107. So we're still talking pretty early, right? One of the apostolic fathers, including others like Clement and Polycarp and Ignatius, Barnabas, they were immediate followers of the inspired apostles.

Some of them like Polycarp knew the original apostles, he knew John, but Ignatius, so we're really early on. And yet he, he was one who interpreted things like Acts 20. Let's just turn there.

And I want to just read it to you and give you the true interpretation. I want to tell you what he said. And Acts 20 verse 17, very familiar words from Miletus, he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church.

And then verse 28, take heed therefore to yourselves, to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made you overseers to feed the church of God, which is purchased with his own blood. So what he said was, in interpreting this, he says, Paul sent to Miletus, from Miletus to Ephesus and called the bishops and presbyters, thus making two titles of one description, and says they were from Ephesus and neighboring cities, thus obscuring the fact that the one church, Ephesus, had several overseers and bishops. Okay, so he's making two out of one by, by calling them bishops and presbyters.

Now again, if you look at Acts 20, he calls the elders and then he tells them that these mature men were overseers or bishops. In other words, that was what they did, is they looked over the flock, and then they also pastored or fed the flock, omen, feed the flock of God. And so he's speaking of the same individuals.

One was speaking of their maturity, another is more their job description, looking over and feeding, right? So, but he, he says, no, they're two different groups. And so, so he, he's the one that kind of starts this. And so, and he, as he writes to other churches, his letter to the church at Ephesus says, let us take heed, brethren, that we set not ourselves against the bishop, against the bishop, that we might be subject to God.

So don't stand against the bishop, because we want to be subject to God. It is therefore evident that we ought to look upon the bishop even as we do upon the Lord himself. Now this is 35 to, you know, this is early.

Look upon the bishop. To the Magnesians, I exhort you to study all things in divine concord, your bishops presiding in the place of God, your presbyters in the place of the council of the apostles, your deacons most dear to me being entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ. So, so early on, we've got this.

And now some of it was really, a lot of the early Christians were Jews. And I, I really believe that there was a Judaizing of Christianity very early on. See, in the Jewish system, you've got the priests and the Levites.

Pretty soon, they began to kind of see things in those lights. You've got one group, and then you've got another group, and they're, one is, you know, kind of more directly involved in spiritual things, the other is not. And by the way, just let me just say this as an aside.

One of the things that you and I have got to be careful of today, brethren, there's a huge attempt to Judaize Christianity today. Anybody ever heard of the Hebrew Roots Movement? Assemblies have been affected by that. Judaism and Christianity are like oil and water.

Don't mix, right? Two different things. God began a new thing in Acts chapter two, with a new creation. We can learn, right? These things are written for our learning.

Yes, we learn from the, but we're not the. We're a different entity. Earthly people, heavenly people.

I'm convinced if, when we look at church history, one of the things we're going to see is the importance of dispensationalism. I can't emphasize enough, I know it's kind of not a popular subject these days, but I'm convinced if you don't understand dispensational distinctions, you're going to make a mess of the Word of God every time. We need to get back to simple dispensational truth.

And these guys, they were getting things confused. There's a Judaizing taking place. And so, by the time you get to Clement of Rome begins to use the term laity, and the word clergy starts to be used to clerical orders, ecclesiastical orders.

177, Tertullian writes these things. So, pretty soon this thing is happening. By the time you get to Cyprian, 200 to 258, it says there's no baptism and no salvation outside the Catholic church.

The church is the ark of salvation. Do you have any problem with that? I have a huge problem with that. Christ is the ark of salvation, not the church.

The church is the ark of salvation. The clergy is its sacrificing priests. Right? See what's going on? And this is so, so early on.

You can't love God for your father if you don't love the church as your mother. So, we're not going very long. And this stuff is already coming in.

And so, we've got to be careful. And let's just say this, because we're going to try and make this as practical as we can. But don't fool yourself.

Don't think that if you think assemblies don't have diatrophesis. There are many assemblies. You have a CEO, chief elder operating.

And often this CEO has kept the doors open. But in the process, he's driven the flock out. And many left assemblies, not because they didn't love assembly principles, but they couldn't bear being under a tyrant any longer.

That's the bottom line, folks. Right? And I know people that used to be in assemblies. And they're not anymore.

And I'm not saying that they're right. But you start talking to them. And sometimes it's because of a guy called diatrophism.

So, we've got to make sure that we can see the rise of clericalism. But it's very easy for that desire to have the preeminent place to be in our hearts, too. And we want to make sure that always, always the Lord Jesus has the preeminent place.

And not any man. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. So, that's a good place to stop.

But at least we've got a little taste of going into church history. And I hope it's going to be practical. And I hope it's going to be helpful to you.

But it certainly is something that is, I think, needful for us to at least have a consciousness of what has happened in the history of the church. That's great. Father, we just thank you for our little time in the Word of God this evening.

And, Lord, we just ask that we might have the heart of a servant and have something of the humility of Christ in our lives, rather than the pride and swagger of a diatrophist. Lord, we just want to walk humbly with you. And we pray you'd use these lessons from history in a good way in our lives this week.

That we'd learn from the mistakes of others and maybe be challenged by the zeal and passion of others as well. And, Lord, we pray, too, just for all of us, that activity might not replace intimacy. In fact, we'd like our activity to come out of the intimate place.

That we've been lingering in your presence. And then when we go out, as it were, to labor, we still have the aroma of Christ upon us in all of our service. So we look to thee to help us in these things in that lovely, fragrant name of thy beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/30/SID30010.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/mike-attwood/church-history-series-part-1/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net