

Church of God History. Tending to the Past. Preserving for the Future

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Introduction

Over the years and decades of my dedication to understanding, promulgating and archiving Church of God history, the feedback has been over-whelmingly positive. There was one incident that a man in a position derided it all and would have liked it all dismantled. Another stated that no one would be interested in all of this. The Scriptures Matt 7:6; Prov 23:9 came to mind when I encountered these attitudes.

It is also disconcerting and even sometimes disheartening that some wish to alter history to suit themselves. To force a different slant on it. Or to so disdain it that they trample and stamp on it like some sort of spiritual savage, destroying the past and having a negative impact on the future. There is no redacting by this author in this or other articles or other information on various subject matter.

But that is not being truthful even though the promulgator of such may feel secure and it may fulfill his or her ambitions. But as posited by myself, the truth must out.

Jealousy has seen members and scholars cast out for this sort of research. Some areas of the world are culturally of that mold and this rubs off into the church, almost unrecognizable to most, but it has a negative impact.

Allow me to quote from Cicero who wrote the following of fifth column traitors within during 42 BC:

"A nation [read Church] can survive its fools and even the ambitious. But it cannot survive treason from within. An enemy at the gates is less formidable, for he is known and he carries his banners openly. But the traitor moves among those within the gate freely, his sly whispers rustling through all the alleys, heard in the very halls of government itself. **For the traitor appears not traitor!** He speaks in the accent familiar to his victims and he appeals to the baseness that lies deep in the hearts of all men. He rots the soul of a nation. **He works secretly and unknown in the night to undermine the pillars of a city [or church];** He infects the body politic so that it can no longer resist. A murderer is less to be feared".

So, it is with those who wish to 'white-ant' the Church of God from within, starting with diminishing our history and trying to get us to disengage from it. It is a sort of spiritual culture wars – rather similar to where the radicals are successfully unhooking the West from its history, heroes and culture (art, dance, music) thereby dismantling the West. Their stated aims are now well on the way to eliminating Western civilisation.

The spiritual radicals within are practicing the same means to eliminate the history of the Church of God and therefore its roots.

Why we need to tend time

What can we do about all of this?

First of all, we need to tend time – that is the history of our spiritual lineage and related topics. But that means not just preserving and increasing the knowledge of our roots, but also fixing incorrect knowledge of the past by reviewing it and refreshing any output on the subject (i.e. books, articles or presentations).

Also, it is essential to preserve an accurate record for the future because in many cases, the record of our history is too shallow and too haphazard. There is much forgotten history and neglect of promoting information about church leaders and pioneers over the centuries.

Further, do we not need to give a voice to the past and to those portions of our history overlooked? Even highlighting problems with the past in governance and policy; or missing detail in doctrines?

In other words, tending to the past.

Tending time!

Lessons learned

Ask yourself this question about our history: “what do we need?”

Answer: “We need a Christian approach to history that provokes a cultural relevance to all today, including the youth.”

Because we need to know the story of our history (‘warts and all’ and not white-washed), we get to know our roots, the torch bearers over the centuries and become thereby part of a rich heritage.

Then we can pose questions as we proceed on this journey of why we have this or that belief; or why we do this or that. Should we know about our ideas and how our beliefs developed? Where did we come from over the centuries? How did various historical developments (e.g. religious persecutions, wars and culture) shape us?

Sure, this may prompt us to having difficult conversations, but is that not part of clarifying our thinking and improving what we have?

By discussing the legacy of the church, we will be able to articulate our roots; how we developed; and what we can do into the future to improve upon what we have built so far. In other words, ongoing quality improvements.

"When a Land [read Church] rejects its legends,
Sees but falsehoods in the past,
And its People [read some Church members] view their sires [read the pioneers]
In the light of fools and liars,
'Tis a sign of its decline,
And its splendours cannot last.
Branches that but blight their roots,
Yield no sap for lasting fruits [ie growth or a happy environment]".

[F.R.A. Glover of England, 1861]

And is that not what has occurred?

Conclusions

Many have lost interest in history and the past as it is presented to them as boring or not important. It is this attitude that affects our spiritual development. They have thereby contributed to an almost crisis in historical understanding of the Church of God.

What is important to many of these? Comfort, entertainment and leisure which makes us less spiritually productive as the Bible, related knowledge (such as Church history) and true Christianity – outgoing concern for others – becomes secondary. Resultingly, the duty of the Christian just becomes something to pull off the shelf after the natural needs of the flesh are met first.

Rather, are we not meant to live as children of God as a community daily, weekly, annually without selfishness? All which breed division and enhance the fruits of the flesh one of which is jealousy (Gal 5:20).

For instance, jealousy toward those that try and be productive including by tending to the past to preserve for the future. Tripping up such people to cause them harm and thereby preventing the continuation of this tending to our history.

Instead let us be a new community in fellowship, supporting one another's gifts and talents. After all, we are not private property or private time. We belong to God and these things belong to Him. We are merely the stewards.

So let us cultivate, tend and keep the past and that helps us with being anchored into the Truth.

If the reader is interested, there is a large amount of research into the history of the Church of God [here](#).

**“We owe it to our ancestors to preserve entire those rights [or history], which they have delivered to our care: we owe it to our posterity, not to suffer the dearest inheritance to be destroyed”
*(The letters of Junius (1769), No. 20)***

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The purpose and desire is to foster Biblical, historical and related studies that strengthen the Church of God's message & mission and provides further support to its traditional doctrinal positions.