

Education Lectures 2001

The Teaching of History:

A Biblical Perspective

Gwyneth Evans

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ISBN 1 901086 16 X

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May 2001

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This booklet is based on a lecture given at Emmanuel College, Gateshead, on Thursday 17 May 2001 by Miss Gwyneth Evans

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What is history?

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As with other subjects, it is important to bring a faith informed perspective into the classroom from the outset and adopt a principled approach, encouraging our children to develop convictions so that they can establish life principles while they are young.

Definitions of History

The Oxford Dictionary 1989 states that History is a 'Continuous record of important or public events. The study of past events, especially of human affairs. Past events; those connected with a person or a thing. An interesting or eventful past.'

This definition is further supported by postmodernist historian Keith Jenkins:

'History is a shifting problematic discourse, ostensibly about an aspect of the world, the past that is produced by a group of present minded workers who go about their work in mutually recognisable ways that are epistemologically, methodologically, ideologically and practically positioned and whose products once in circulation, are subject to a series of uses and abuses that are logically infinite but which in actuality generally correspond to a range of power bases that exists at any given moment and which structure and distribute the meanings of histories along a dominant – marginal spectrum.'¹

Neither definition mentions God: indeed both are characterised by today's secular value system, which is opposed to a Christian perspective. An alternative definition is to be found in Webster's dictionary of 1828:

'History is an account of facts, particularly of facts respecting nations or states; a narration of events in the order in which they happened, with their causes and effects. History regards less strictly the arrangement of events under each year, and admits the observations of the writer. This distinction however is not always regarded with strictness... What is the history of nations, but a narrative of the follies, crimes and miseries of man?'

History is the study of the acts of man in a fallen world, and further to Webster's definition, it is how and why they live in obedience and disobedience to God. It is the interaction of leaders, people and the environment, and it is not cyclical or repeatable.

History is derived from the Greek word for *inquiry* and in the 5th century BC, in longstanding Greek tradition, Herodotus, who is regarded as the father of history, recorded wars between Greece and Persia: what he had seen and heard, supplemented by reading, and verified by inquiry.

The study of history provides repeated, concrete demonstration of the character of the Christian faith. Christians have the key to understanding history because of the transcendental perspective afforded in the Bible. The Biblical doctrines of Creation, Incarnation and Judgment allow the Christian to understand the flow and meaning of history, to know for certain where history is going. Christianity is ultimately the acts of God in space and in time, with the acts of God in Christ central.

Many of us may have heard the statement 'History is bunk' by the American businessman Henry Ford. With this statement Ford dismissed the whole of his history and his people and the rich history of his nation's past and he bequeathed to many a philosophy of history that says that really there is no use in history at all.² Many history teachers may have heard their students question 'Why do we have to study history anyway? It's all in the past!'

In today's climate there has been a push towards postmodern revisionism and the emergence of blind relativism and historyless hedonism, without any reference to God.

A Christian starting point

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A contemporary theologian Mark Noll opens up the question: 'What can we know about the past? About the shape and significance of the actions, thoughts, institutional creations, assumptions, and intentions of those who have lived before us? And how should we think about efforts to describe and interpret the past? Given the nature of the human mind, given the character of evidence linking our present existence with past lives, and given the relationship of human thought whether past or present to the conceptual framework provided by societies and cultures as a whole, what is possible and what is not possible to affirm about our knowledge of the past?'³

As Christians our ultimate, authoritative and inerrant framework of reference is Scripture and we acknowledge that there are absolute truths and values, which are God's overall purpose and movement in history. In understanding the hand of God in human affairs the Psalmist says in Psalm 78 v 2-8 'sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength, and His wonderful works that He hath done. For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel which He commanded our fathers that they should make known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments: And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not steadfast with God'. This Psalm highlights that God is at the heart of History. History is a story in which providence has countered human aberration.

The Christian History teacher's starting point is that God is a wise, powerful, holy, just, good and true God who has created the world and is not only interested in and concerned with it but intimately involved with it; all things are ordained at the beginning of human existence and right through the

panorama of history. The world was created in time; man fell into sin; God prepared for the coming of the Redeemer, who was born, lived, died and rose again, so that human beings might enjoy everlasting fellowship with Him. As the Architect, Creator and Sustainer of nations and individuals His purpose in human history is that man should seek Him. He is sovereign over the universe and providentially cares for his creation, and works out His purpose for every person and every nation in the unfolding of history. God has decreed His eternal purpose and has appointed what shall be in time and through eternity. Nothing can fall out in time to alter God's decrees, as this would suggest weakness. Providence is the backbone of the History curriculum. Nothing can happen that lies outside the reach of God's sovereignty; no experiences that the church has undergone, no matter how glorious or mundane, are irrelevant to the divine purpose. God has decreed to bring about His purposes in a way agreeable to the nature and liberty of free agents without any constraint upon their will, it being easy for infinite knowledge to foresee how they will incline and determine in every situation. The true Christian historian acknowledges that God has determined human behaviour. God knows our ways, ordering the events of our lives, watching each step that we take, guiding and protecting; he is our guardian and father.

God is the Alpha and Omega

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Bismarck, the Chancellor of the German Empire from 1871 -1890, commented, 'The statesman cannot create the stream of time, he can only navigate it. The statesman must try and reach for the hem when he hears the garment of God rustling through events.'⁴

God is the author of history and superintends each step in the universe: the physical world, the affairs of nations, and of individuals and families, continually working out His purposes. The affairs of the nations are under his guidance and control.

'He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty. ... He increaseth the nations, and destroyeth them: he enlargeth the nations and straiteneth them again.' (Job Ch 12 v 19, 23) The world is governed by His wisdom and not just by chance.

In the words of the Westminster Shorter Catechism 'His decrees are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for His own glory, he hath fore-ordained whatsoever comes to pass'.⁵ This is executed through both creation and providence. God governs and 'preserves all His creatures and all their actions',⁶ not even a sparrow falls to the ground without the knowledge of our heavenly father and that all the hairs of our head are numbered.

Ephesians chapter 1 v 11 says 'In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.'

R. L. Dabney, who was Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Virginia said at his inaugural lecture in 1854: 'The history of the church and of the world is but the evolution of the eternal purpose of that God who works all things after the counsel of His own will. Deep in the secrets of his own breast is hidden the united plan from which the pattern is gradually unfolded of the tangled web of human affairs. As that decree is one so history is a unit.'⁷

Those who say that everything in history can be explained without bringing

God into the argument are doing no more than walking around in a circle because God is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.

A sense of history provides the pupil with a correct understanding of their place and significance in time. Study of ancient history enables pupils to realise that we are not all there has ever been and modern history helps to illuminate present day society.

Unlike teachers of other subjects the history teacher is separated from his subject by time and therefore a great deal of what has taken place is omitted from history books. Our knowledge is dependent upon a variety of written and pictorial sources, which can often be inadequate and misleading and whose authors have their own agenda. There are vast possibilities for historical error in any ostensibly accurate account and the corroboration of evidence is certainly not conclusive. The conclusions reached by an historian are dependent upon his values and beliefs; no historian can avoid bias: this is demonstrated in the selection or omission of evidence or material, which will produce a version of history that will support his own beliefs.

Herbert Butterfield in 'Christianity and History' says, 'The agents of history - those who act and who witness actions, those who make and transmit records, those who attempt to reconstruct past actions on the basis of those records - are people with world views, biases, blind spots and convictions.'⁸ Regardless of any historian's conclusions, he or she is not an infallible observer. We must be cautious because his or her view is far from the complete picture. We can have reliable knowledge and real understanding of the past, but this knowledge and understanding is necessarily limited. A historian investigates and questions the past based on valid evidence, therefore developing a critical mind. It is important to challenge and interrogate evidence, as facts are not neutral. Man is fallen and flawed and falls short of God's standards and cannot possibly understand the whole of history with a finite mind. In pursuing knowledge fallen man tries to relegate God, denying his existence and regarding God's overarching plan as totally irrelevant and even preposterous. Man sees himself as God and the source of history. The Christian historian ought to examine evidence critically and reach his judgement based on Biblical absolutes.

In practice how does a Christian historian differ in approach from an unbeliever?

Opposing viewpoints

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The historian who sees man as the source of history will always look for the causes of events. His *modus operandi* is to trace cause and effect.

The Christian historian on the other hand knows that ultimately God is the cause of all events.

Events that led up to World War I could be attributed to the arms race, problems in the Balkans, the Moroccan crisis and the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand. Was it an accident or God? Nothing happens by chance. This is a point of controversy for those who do not believe in the absolute sovereignty of God and his omnipresence and omniscience. The Christian History teacher should present to pupils that as men plan and work with only their own immediate and material interests in view, there is a power who is unobserved overruling their actions to the furtherance of higher, more extended, and more permanent purposes.

A leading American educationalist Dr Carol Adams states, 'God's hand is seen in the starting, speeding, retarding, and matching such coincident and colliding influences as mark the progress and constitute the varied crises of history'⁹.

The Direct Intervention of God

While we recognise that God is involved in all parts of history there are events where His direct intervention is very clear, for instance in the Bible we can take the example of the children of Israel escaping from Egypt and crossing the Red Sea, and the provision for the widow of Zarephath. Over the past 2 millennia there have been events where apparent miracles have happened; human minds or strength could not bring about the resolutions witnessed. For example at Dunkirk, half a million British soldiers were trapped as they moved towards the English Channel. Hitler ordered that Dunkirk be left to the Luftwaffe so that the escape of the English forces across the Channel would be prevented. British intelligence had intercepted Hitler's

message and an armada of little ships rescued the British Expeditionary Force. Two days later Hitler changed his mind and the Panzers were to resume their advance but heavy rain impeded their progress as well as hampering Luftwaffe attacks. Over 370,000 men were saved.

Another example is the battle of Agincourt on 25th Oct 1415. British troops were heavily outnumbered by the French, and just before battle the battlefield was completely drenched and battle conditions were dire. Humanly speaking there was no way that the British should have won the battle but the English bowmen massacred the French.

Benefit coming from Suffering

Other lessons can be learned from different types of events where the normal course of 'cause and effect' appears to have been overruled. Richard Baxter, a Puritan, lived through the Restoration of 1660. He was amazed at the conduct of the army of the Commonwealth. It had conquered three kingdoms, killed the king and dissolved parliaments, but it quietly disbanded 'without one bloody nose' at the Restoration of Charles II. Baxter commented, 'Let any man that hath the use of his understanding judge whether this were not enough to prove that there is a God that governeth the world and disposeth of the powers of the world according to his will'.¹⁰ Baxter saw the hand of God at work as bloodshed had been avoided and there was no renewal of civil war.

In the same century The Great Fire of London wiped out the plague that threatened to take the lives of much of the population of England. The fire stopped the plague although the people did not realise why, and Charles II instructed that a new city be built, so that the surviving people benefited rather than lost. There have been other apparent disasters that have allowed man to progress, for example advancement as a result of the difficult period of the Industrial Revolution, and the development of medicine and technology after the atrocities of World War I.

Christian Influence on Society

Other huge changes such as the Reformation had tremendous impact, sweeping throughout most of Europe. The Reformation accelerated change. It taught, applied and developed the ideas of democracy. God used individuals

such as Martin Luther and John Calvin who have had a huge influence on society in government as well as religion. A salutary lesson to be learned here from history is that as teachers we should be aware that God may use even our pupils mightily in society.

The marks of God's intervention in the affairs of men cannot be erased; their effects have resounded down through the corridors of time, and having taken place, will continue to have effects.

'Our Ways are not His Way'

When trying to pinpoint the hand of God in human affairs, however, we may be guilty of presumption, of professing to know the mind of God. God's thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are our ways His Way (Isaiah Ch 55 v 8-9). Asserting that God has intervened to rescue one particular side in certain historical events may lead to the belief that Christians can discern God's judgement in such events and to the claim that earthly success reveals God's favour, while defeat or failure represents God's judgement. This would be a complete fallacy. Whatever we might like to think we cannot say that God is an Englishman or even an Ulsterman! God in his wisdom permits events and their outcomes so that He will be glorified and individuals drawn to Him.

Earthly victory should not be seen as a sign of God's favour nor earthly failure as representing his judgement. Indeed it is clear that this is not the case as many historians would use the issue of suffering to question the doctrine of providence. They cannot understand why a God of love would permit pain and trouble or allow the wicked to prosper. God has revealed a law for man to follow; if that law is not followed man himself is responsible. God's holy hand limits, and restrains men and directs them to holy and wise ends. God uses all human acts including sinful acts to fulfil his purposes so that men will turn to God. There is no greater example in history than God's designing the crucifixion of Christ from eternity, and bringing the greatest good to mankind, though this does not provide an excuse for the wicked part that the Jews acted in it, as it was their own voluntary deed. Christ's suffering achieved victory over death. Acts Ch 2 v 23 'Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain'. We have seen that God ordains all things,

but man is responsible if he breaks God's law. Human wilfulness does not stop God from directing all events. Everything that happens is permitted. Joseph comforted his brothers after his father's death and they feared for their future: 'Fear not: for am I in the place of God?...ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good' (Gen Ch 50 v 19 & 20). Joseph was of a greater blessing to his family than he otherwise could have been. God brings good out of evil and promotes the designs of his providence even by the sins of men. Romans Ch 8 v 28 'All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose.' In His infinite wisdom he overrules events and directs the chain of them so that He is honoured, to help men discover the deceitfulness of their own hearts and to make them more watchful. God is in control. Man cannot thwart or limit God's sovereign will for the salvation of his people and in dealing with his enemies.

There are human acts throughout history that we find it hard to understand in the light of God's providence such as the Holocaust. For such situations we can gain a measure of understanding through Scripture but must believe that 'the secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law'. (Deuteronomy Ch 29 v 29) We need to trust that God is in control of human history even if we cannot always see that control. God does not owe us an explanation for what He does and there are many things He has not revealed to us. For instance Genesis 3 does not explain where Satan came from or why He was allowed to tempt Eve. Even in the book of Job our questions are not answered. Job has to learn to humble himself and bow before sovereign wisdom. Paul in Romans Ch 3 v 1-8 rebuts the charge that God is unjust, rebuking the questioner; He declares and vindicates God's justice and integrity.

The Prevalence of Evil

We must remember that much suffering is caused by human sin. Scripture gives us new historical perspectives; we are not merely told to accept the above argument. God has revealed how he vindicates his goodness. The books of Job and Psalms contain laments about the prevalence of evil. The twin themes of God's justice and mercy run throughout the Old Testament.

In the same way that Old Testament saints waited for the Messiah to deal with the problem of evil, so we must wait in faith for the Parousia (Second Coming), when evil will be dealt with finally. The death and resurrection of Christ assure us that evil has been dealt with definitively and we now await the consummation of all things. Psalms 37 and 73 remind us that the wicked will not always flourish. In glory we will not doubt the justice of God's ways, whether we get a complete answer to all our intellectual questions or not. The best answer we have to the problem of evil and the consequent human suffering is not a philosophical one, but is the incarnation, life, death, resurrection and return of Jesus Christ. God in his wisdom has not only allowed the existence of evil, but has dealt with it at great cost to Himself. It is from this perspective of faith in the absolute truth, this position of certainty, that we can begin to understand God's perfect plan and also deal with current influences and strands of historical thought which influence our texts.

Humanist Influences in the National Curriculum

Secular humanism, seen in the Marxist, Cyclical, Historicist and Progressive interpretations of history, has influenced key documents such as the National Curriculum and Examination Syllabuses for History as well as the key texts used in the classroom. What are these interpretations?

Marxist – the human process is created by man as he labours to satisfy his basic needs and history is therefore based around historical materialism. Marxism sees history as a class struggle.

Cyclical - history is a pattern of cycles and follows a cyclical paradigm of society rising and falling. The belief is that there is nothing new to witness in the past or to come; this is very popular in the East and supports the idea of reincarnation. The New Age movement would hold to this view.

Historicist – different cultures are moulded by history and the historian's task is to understand these cultures through empathy.

Progressive – instead of seeing God as the guide of history, people are normally seen as the sole agents. Progress can be made; as one of the school's leading exponents Condorcet put it man is 'emancipated from his shackles, released from the empire of fate and from that of the enemies of progress, advancing with a firm and sure step along the path of truth, virtue and happiness'.¹¹

These are diametrically opposed to the **Judaeo – Christian** position - history is not a cycle, but a straight line. The historical process begins at the point of creation and under God's sovereign hand will continue until the Lord's return.¹²

Postmodern philosophies reject metanarratives and grassroots solutions and over emphasize content. Certainty is absent. Philosophies and ideals are seen as truth and man is seen as being responsible for his own destiny.

In our postmodernist age of cultural rootlessness, moral relativism, religious pluralism and social disintegration, the contemporary historian questions whether there is such a thing as fact.

The history curriculum is based on a process, which is personal, political, and communal focusing heavily on historical skills rather than having an overview. The framework and agenda excludes any divine aspect. The current prevailing trend is to say that lack of proof renders historical fact, if such there is, less relevant and that the focus should be on the historian. The Christian historian believes that it is possible to discern facts: they cannot be marginalized and are integral. Any other thinking gives too much credence to the interpretation of fallible human beings who superimpose their own worldviews on history, and ultimately casts doubt on the veracity of the claims of Christ.

What implications does this have for the teaching of history?

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The Changing Emphasis

The development of new social science subjects stemming from a postmodern agenda has resulted in the increasing marginalisation of history as an examination subject especially at GCSE.

History is compulsory at Key Stage 3 and then an option subject at GCSE and A - level. Over the past 10 years history has had to prove itself as a subject worthy of study relevant to the modern day, so in an effort to meet that so-called challenge the subject has veered toward a skills based approach. Melanie Phillips journalist and author of 'All must have Prizes' says, 'There has been a division between those who believe that the teaching of history had to involve transmitting a body of factual knowledge about the past, and those who believed that what the primary lesson children had to learn from history was that no facts were true, that everything was a matter of subjective interpretation – from which flowed the emphasis on imaginative empathy and source work.Empathy and source work meant children had to find things out for themselves instead of being taught – which meant local history took precedence over national or international events'¹³. Phillips again comments, that 'Whilst it is important that pupils understand how to evaluate sources and acquire the skills of an historian, the danger is that the process becomes mechanistic and formulaic and pupils know very little about the narrative or topic other than what is revealed in the sources. So history is reduced to the use of their imagination and the application of doubt and its overwhelming message to the pupil is: there is no historical truth at all – the only meaning that can accrue to the historical record is what any individual makes of it'.¹⁴ This approach contributes to an atheistic or agnostic point of view.

In the teaching of history today the skills to be acquired include the acquisition, evaluation and reproduction of information relevant to an understanding of historical issues.

Historical source material and empathy can enhance pupil learning if taught properly. Empathy should be used to challenge pupils to understand the motives, beliefs and attitudes of people in the past. It is more than trying to feel as they felt; there must be proper reflection upon the historical context and this should be geared towards a conceptual understanding. However to examine whether or not Cinderella or Florence Nightingale were real people is futile. Source material must be taught in terms of seeking to establish what has happened in the past, rather than encouraging doubting everything and trusting nothing. Some may raise the concern that children taught to evaluate historical texts in this way will be inclined to see the Bible merely as a source to be questioned without any necessary intrinsic truth. However while we should seek to present the Bible as different and not to be treated as other literary or historical texts, it is only by the help of God's Holy Spirit enlightening the mind, that any reader can in a true sense understand and appreciate its meaning. The Bible as the divinely inspired word of God is living and active and can only be spiritually understood by faith given by God.

Pupils' Lack of Knowledge

In any case those who have adopted an entirely skills based approach and marginalised factual knowledge are now realising that the product of this is lack of awareness of the past. In a recent Osprey survey testing children's knowledge and understanding, Hitler was leader of England during World War II, Henry VIII had eight wives, Oliver Cromwell fought at the Battle of Hastings 1066, and Queen Victoria was on the throne during the Spanish Armada; 39% of those tested knew the Romans were in Britain in 100AD and there was further evidence of pupils' lack of knowledge in both national and international history.

In the current climate the teacher is seen merely as a resource while the child teaches him/herself. It is important that where the subject lends itself, the teaching strategy adopted is one that allows the pupil to understand the subject rather than one used as a modern technique for the sake of it.

The National Curriculum

There has been some political debate over what should be included in the curriculum.

In the recently published National Curriculum for History the key knowledge, skills and understanding include:

- Chronology - Studying the more distant periods enables children to understand that there is more than the twentieth century. Pupils must understand the development of political, religious, social, economic and cultural history over the last 2000 years
- Knowledge and understanding of events, people and changes in the past
- Historical interpretation
- Historical enquiry
- Organisation and Communication

A Christian Perspective

The History Curriculum can place emphasis on Biblical principles and teach pupils to understand historical truths as part of God's plan, that the Bible is the foundation for the understanding of history, that God had a design and purpose in every aspect of history.

Most if not all texts do not include any Biblical perspective at all.

The topics studied have a strong British dimension, which provides a basis for teachers to highlight the Christian heritage of the country and now gives scope to consider the role played by Christianity in shaping the spiritual, moral, social and cultural traditions in the 21st century.

Britain 1066-1500- the spiritual awareness of society for eg superstition, traditions, fear of God & judgement

Britain 1500 – 1750 – background to the Reformation and its impact in England

Britain 1750 – 1900 - Opportunities for in-depth study of individuals such as Lord Shaftesbury and Florence Nightingale can serve as a Christian example and inspiration for young people

A European study before 1914 –The French Revolution can be used to show the futility of the revolutionaries in trying to set aside God, for instance

in trying to create 10 day week instead of the God ordained 7 day week.

A World Study before 1900 – slavery and the moral perspective

A World Study after 1900 – religious growth under the suppression of Communism in Eastern Europe/Russia

Conclusion

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It is important that children develop a historical sense, some appreciation of the scope and sweep of world history. We must aim to help pupils to identify and recognize both the good and bad in human action. The modern world is not the proper and correct culmination of all that has gone before. History provides a moral framework, which will equip pupils when arriving at their opinions on the past. As truth has been abandoned the Christian History teacher has the opportunity to present absolute truth and encourage pupils to see things from a Christian perspective.

This presents a wonderful opportunity to tackle information which stands against the Christian position, unmasking the subtle philosophies of our age; we ought not to be ashamed to confront these. Undaunted we should present the truth.

Many pupils may blithely hold ethical values that are not founded on any Christian basis. We must encourage pupils to think critically and enable them to develop a consistent philosophy of life; their ideas should not be held in a vacuum but should be rooted in consistent beliefs about the nature of mankind and the purpose of society. We must provide children with a secure basis so that they have a critical awareness and clarity of thought to read and write discerningly in dealing with evidence presented to them. We should welcome and rise to the challenges and not simply sweep them under the carpet or ignore them. As C.S. Lewis noted 'the task of the modern educator is not to cut down jungles but to irrigate deserts'¹⁵; the biggest obstacle is apathy rather than antipathy.

Faith and history should not be separated; they should be brought together. Faith should not be excluded from any part of our life. Jesus stands over history as its Lord and behind history as its meaning and before history as its purpose. The Christian historian has a confidence for the future. As time had a beginning so it will have an end. 'For now we see through a glass

darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known' (I Corinthians Ch 13 v 12). We know the sovereign God of history has equipped us to meet the challenge.

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The Teaching of History:

A Biblical Perspective

Following the development of new social science subjects, History has had to prove itself as a subject worthy of study relevant to the modern day. In an effort to meet this so-called challenge the subject has veered toward a skills based approach. The emphasis is now on subjective interpretation and imaginative empathy rather than truth and understanding.

In this booklet Gwyneth Evans looks at the definition of History from a Biblical foundation, recognising that the doctrines of Creation, Incarnation and Judgment allow the Christian to understand the flow and meaning of history and to know for certain where history is going. She exposes the dangers of the Marxist, Cyclical, Historicist and Progressive interpretations of History which are influencing the National Curriculum, and discusses ways in which teachers can put forward a Christian Perspective in this environment.



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ISBN 1 901086 16 X

£1.50

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