

Lesson 6 Outline – History: Whose Story?

- I. Introduction – Why is History important?
 - A. Gazing upon the face of God
 - 1. Isaiah 46 – "Remember the former things, those of long ago; I am God ...My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please ...what I have planned, that will I do."
 - 2. Galatians 4:4-5 – "But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son ..."
 - B. History Quiz – The significance of 911 and 9/11 – What you believe in the present is determined by your past - History, in this context, becomes extremely critical
- II. Historical Revisionism – The danger and power of it!
 - A. Rigoberta Menchu – Professor: "Whether her book is true or not, I don't care" – "what is important is getting students to believe what we want in the present"
 - B. Revising the Mayflower Compact – God is being left out of contemporary academia
 - C. Power of Historical Revisionism – "If you rewrite the past, you can make people believe whatever you want in the present"
 - 1. Lies about History are not new
 - a. In the garden - "Did God really say?"
 - b. The resurrection – "His disciples stole the body" – Matthew 28:11-15
 - 2. Veracity of Scripture – Dating and number of historical manuscripts
- III. God's Mandate to Remember
 - A. Memorial Stones – Joshua 4:1-7
 - B. Tassels – Numbers 15:38-39, Deuteronomy 22:12
 - C. Feasts – Ex. Passover – Exodus 12:24-27, Deuteronomy 4:9, 6:4-12
 - D. Deuteronomy 8:10-20 – "Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God ..."
- IV. Battle over History
 - A. Nature of the Battle – Ultimately it is against the nature of God – 2 Corinthians 10:3
 - B. God's Sovereign Rule – His providential plan and sovereign control for mankind
 - 1. Acts 4:27-28 – To do whatever your plan had predestined to take place
 - 2. 1 Kings 22:28-34 – Story of Ahab and the "random arrow"
 - C. Postmodernism & Cultural rejection of metanarratives – "There is no larger story"
- V. The Larger Story
 - A. Del's Photo Album – Many little stories that weave together the story of life
 - B. Natural Myopia – Nearsightedness – We lose sight of the larger story of God
 - C. God's Photo Album – People who were caught up in the grand story of God
 - D. Pilgrim's Providential View of History – "They cherished a great hope and inward zeal of laying good foundations ...even though they should be but stepping stones to others in the performance of so great a work."
 - E. A people who are caught up in their own little story will never be willing to lay themselves down as stepping stones for others

Leaders Guide Lesson 6 - History

Introduction



The word "remember" is central to the message of episode 6. On this tour we will set up the fourth and final pillar in the Temple of Truth – *History* – and take a close look at the importance of maintaining a firm grip on the past. In the process, we will see that a proper appreciation of *historical context* – in other words, our place in God's "larger story" – is fundamental to an accurate understanding of almost every aspect of our lives. History provides us with indispensable insights into the meaning of existence, God's plan and purpose for the ages, man's responsibility toward the Creator, and his duty toward his fellow creatures.

Themes

Dr. Tackett's key scripture passage for this discussion is Isaiah 46:9-11: "Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done ... Indeed, I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass ... " Two major thoughts arise from these verses. First, God is *sovereign*, or absolutely *in control*. History is in the most literal sense *His* story. Nothing happens at random or by chance. The hairs of our heads are numbered, and the details of our lives are threads in the great tapestry of His overarching providential plan. Second, we as human beings cannot understand our place in the world without cultivating a vision of ourselves as part of this larger story. This is why the Bible contains so many exhortations to "remember" what God has done in the past, whether through the device of "memorial stones," annual festivals, tassels, phylacteries, or the discipline of hiding His Word in our hearts. If we do *not* remember, we run the risk of becoming myopic, proud, self-sufficient, and eventually incurring our own destruction (see Deuteronomy 8) – not necessarily *physical* destruction, but rather a complete loss of identity, purpose, and meaning, or what Amos refers to as a "famine of hearing the Word of the Lord" (Amos 8:11).

Here too we come face to face with the implications of man's fallen nature and encounter yet another manifestation of the *Cosmic Battle*. Man resists the idea of a sovereign God. He wants to control his own destiny, live inside his own "little story," and free himself from all connections with or references to an all-inclusive divine plan. Thus he devises ways to propagate the "pernicious lie" of self-determination ("I am my own god," or "I believe in myself") by taking the larger story of history into his own hands and turning it into a powerful *tool* for the manipulation of other people and the accomplishment of his own selfish purposes. *Historical revisionism*, or the agenda-driven re-writing of history, operates on the basis of the premise, "If I can change your historical context, I can determine the way you view the present." This strategy is consistent with George Orwell's observation that "He who controls the past controls the future" and Karl Marx's dictum, "A people without a heritage are easily persuaded."

Postmodernism – the contemporary philosophical perspective that rejects both *revelation* and *reason* – takes this process to an extreme conclusion by denying the validity of all comprehensive truth systems, or what it calls *metanarratives* (including Christianity). Stated simply, the postmodern perspective maintains that there *is* no "larger story." Instead, everyone must tell his or her *own* story and invent (if possible) his or her *own* concept of meaning and significance. In other words, history does not exist at all except as it exists in our own minds, where it can be edited and tailored to further our own goals in the present.

Points to Watch for

As we have seen so often during the course of our first five tours, the essence of the *Cosmic Battle* or the conflict between Truth and Lies can be boiled down to a confrontation between the claims of the sovereign God and the claims of the sovereign self. It's the old story of the Garden of Eden, where the serpent re-wrote the past by asking, "Has God really said ...?" and where man became completely caught up in his own "little story." From beginning to end, Dr. Tackett's message in episode 6 is that "It's *not* all about *you*." As Jesus put it, "He who seeks to save his life will lose it." Given our current "self-actualizing" cultural climate, it is likely that some group participants will take exception to this idea. Others may have theological objections to Dr. Tackett's statements about the relationship between God's sovereignty and human free will; for he states very plainly that if we are *only* free agents, then we are completely without hope.

The Truth Project: Lesson 6 – Whose Story?

...When the children of Israel would stray, God invariably would come and say “remember...

Isaiah 46: 9-11

⁹ Remember the former things, those of long ago;

I am God, and there is no other;

I am God, and there is none like me.

¹⁰ I make known the end from the beginning,

from ancient times, what is still to come.

I say: My purpose will stand,

and I will do all that I please.

¹¹ From the east I summon a bird of prey;

from a far-off land, a man to fulfill my purpose.

What I have said, that will I bring about;

what I have planned, that will I do.

- God appears to us as one in control – sovereign
- He is fulfilling His purpose
- He is carrying out His plan

Galatians 4:4-5 (NASB)

⁴ But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, ⁵ so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

- Plan in place – Time was right, God acted.
- This brings us face to face with a God who is in charge... Do we really want him in charge?

An Exam

8:59 – Time : How do we recognize it as a time?

1859 – Date: When we look at it we recognize it as a date. Why?

- *Origin of Species* written in 1859

1 – How/why do we recognize this symbol as a numeric one? We learned it

11 – How come we don't see it this as one-one? We were taught that.

911 - Is this nine hundred eleven or nine-one-one?

- How does a culture change from recognizing this as nine hundred eleven to nine-one-one?

We have been taught something different...

The Past - Events that have happened

The Future - Events still to come

The Present - A very thin line sliding along converting the future into the past

Principle:

What you believe in the present is determined by the past.

Because of this principle, history becomes critical in the cosmic battle!

Mis-Using History

Rigoberta Menchu - An Autobiography detailing growing up in Guatemala

- David Stoll
 - Did doctoral work in Guatemala and found that many events cited in the book to be fabricated – a fraud.
- Marjorie Agosin:
 - “Whether her book is true, I don't care”
 - ...what is important is that we teach our students about the social injustices in Guatemala...
 - This professor believes you can change history. Why? – To get someone to believe in the present what you want them to believe.

Historical Revisionism:

A process where history is altered or the past is reinterpreted in order to accomplish a particular agenda or objective. If you rewrite the past, you can make people believe whatever you want in the present. There is a large liberal agenda to rewrite history in order to leave Christian themes and God out of public academia.

The Mayflower Compact - The New School Version
November 11, 1620

“We whose names are underwritten...
having undertaken,
a voyage to plant the first colony...”

The Mayflower Compact - The Real Version
November 11, 1620

“In the name of God, Amen.

We whose names are underwritten...
having undertaken,

for the glorie of God, and
advancemente of the Christian faith...

a voyage to plant the first colony...”

The Context of History

If I can change your historical context, I can change the way you view the present.

- This is the **power** of historical revisionism.

First Historical Revision: The serpent in the garden “did God really say...” A direct attempt to restate the past

Writers of modern text books choose to leave out God and the purpose for coming.

- Does it matter if you leave a few words out?
- Is it re-writing history?
- Does it change the historical context?
- What impact does it have on one learning the revised version as historical truth?

Lies About History

Matthew 28: 11-15 (NKJV):

¹¹ Now while they were going, behold, some of the guard came into the city and reported to the chief priests all the things that had happened. ¹² When they had assembled with the elders and consulted together, they gave a large sum of money to the soldiers, ¹³ saying, “Tell them, ‘His disciples came at night and stole Him away while we slept.’” ¹⁴ And if this comes to the governor’s ears, we will appease him and make you secure.” ¹⁵ So they took the money and did as they were instructed; and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day.

- Instruction to the guards: “go re-write history”
- A lie = Historical Revisionism
- It is very difficult to make anyone believe what you want in the present without re-writing history.

Veracity of God’s Word

Do you **believe** in Plato? →

Why is Plato’s existence rarely (if ever) challenged?
Why don’t people question whether he wrote them?

Ancient works and their oldest manuscripts:

Homer’s Iliad	500 yrs	→
Julius Caesars Gallic Wars	1,000 yrs	
Pliny’s History	750 yrs	
Thucydides’ History	1,300 yrs	
Herodotus’ History	1,300 yrs	
New Testament	25 yrs	

The only book that comes under great attack,
challenging its accuracy and correctness is the Bible.

Why?

Number of Early Manuscripts:

Homer’s Iliad	643	→
Julius Caesars Gallic Wars	10	
Pliny’s History	7	
Thucydides’ History	8	
Herodotus’ History	8	
New Testament	>24,000	

NT manuscripts: 5000 Greek, 19,000 other than Greek

No one challenges the veracity of the others...so why
so much challenge to the historical accuracy of the
New Testament? You will need to determine the
objective behind those seeking historical revisionism.

George Orwell

“He who controls the past, controls the future.”

Karl Marx

“A people without a heritage are easily persuaded.”

- If you can re-write the history of a people you can change what they believe in the present

God's Mandate to Remember

Memorial Stones – Joshua 4: 1-7 - Israel crossing the Jordan River collect memorial stones...

How did they do? – Judges 2: 6-15

Other Memorial Stones

Tassels: Numbers 15: 38-39, Deuteronomy 22:12

Passover: Exodus 12: 24-27, Deuteronomy 4:9, Deuteronomy 6: 4-12, & more...

Remembering

what we should forget

Our Problem

Forgetting what we should
remember

Theodore Dalrymple:

"The importance of knowing history is that one realizes that one is the recipient of a tradition...that the world did not begin with one's self nor will it end with one's self. Ignorance of history has the effect that people don't think even of their own lives in historical terms. Without history nothing has meaning. People don't understand that life is a biography and they don't actually see that what they have done earlier in their lives has any impact on what happens to them afterward.

Os Guinness:

"We don't care about the past. History is bunk as Henry Ford said. And many Christians have an abominable view of the past. If we look in the Scripture there is a tremendous stress on remembering. It is one of the key words in the book of Deuteronomy... You remember the whole road you've come...because that is the source 1) of gratitude and 2) of obedience."

Theodore Dalrymple:

"Once I asked a young person when the second world war was and he thought for a time and said "the 18th century" and I was most impressed actually...that was a very good answer because it meant he understood there was a century other than the one in which he was living...Bear in mind this is after 11 years of compulsory education. If you don't have a certain knowledge of history then you can't understand anything about the modern world."

Os Guinness:

"Where we came from, the past and history, is the key to who we are and where we are...and those who do not know history have no sense of identity and no sense of wisdom as they explore where they are going to go. **Without history we're lost** - both in terms of identity and in terms of the wisdom of the way we go forward"

- When you begin to destroy any sense of belonging to a larger story and it's simply about you, then we lose any kind of connection with the answer to the question – what is the meaning of life?

Video "Meaning of Life":

If there is no purpose, you can't waste your life. That comes from a disconnect from God's view of history.

Deuteronomy 8:10-20:

¹⁰ When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land he has given you. ¹¹ Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. ¹² Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, ¹³ and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, ¹⁴ then your heart will become proud and you will forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. ¹⁵ He led you through the vast and dreadful desert, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. ¹⁶ He gave you manna to eat in the desert, something your fathers had never known, to humble and to test you so that in the end it might go well with you. ¹⁷ You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." ¹⁸ But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your forefathers, as it is today. ¹⁹ If you ever forget the LORD your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. ²⁰ Like the nations the LORD destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the LORD your God.

The Battle Against The Nature Of God

2 Corinthians 10:3-5:

³For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. ⁴The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. ⁵We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, **and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.**

H.G. Wells View of God – “The **Frantic Director**”:

Views God as a director in a play...all of a sudden the leading lady trips and stumbles, knocking over a table, knocking over a lamp which sets the curtain on fire. God is back there yelling “cut” but He can’t really stop it because the play is just destroyed before him and He is just running to and fro trying bring order but He can not...

Psalm 33:10-11:

- ¹⁰ The LORD foils the plans of the nations;
he thwarts the purposes of the peoples.
¹¹ But the plans of the LORD stand firm forever,
the purposes of his heart through all generations
- This is why we can be people of hope

Acts 4:27-28 (ESV)

²⁷for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, ²⁸to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place.

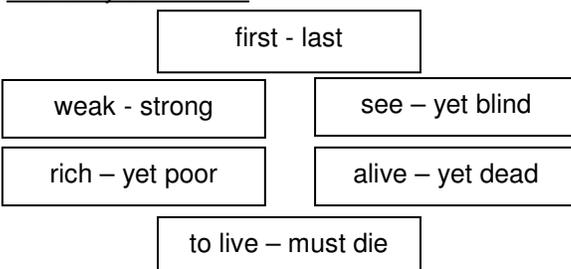
- God is sovereign – in control

1 Kings 22: 28-34 – Ahab & the **Sovereignty of God**

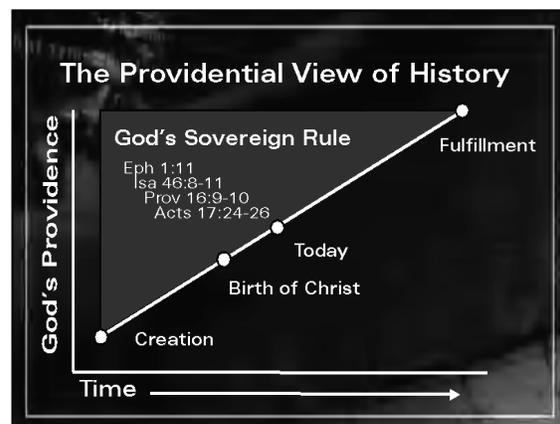
²⁸ Micaiah declared, "If you ever return safely, the LORD has not spoken through me." Then he added, "Mark my words, all you people!" ²⁹ So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat king of Judah went up to Ramoth Gilead. ³⁰ The king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "I will enter the battle in disguise, but you wear your royal robes." So the king of Israel disguised himself and went into battle. ³¹ Now the king of Aram had ordered his thirty-two chariot commanders, "Do not fight with anyone, small or great, except the king of Israel." ³² When the chariot commanders saw Jehoshaphat, they thought, "Surely this is the king of Israel." So they turned to attack him, but when Jehoshaphat cried out, ³³ the chariot commanders saw that he was not the king of Israel and stopped pursuing him. ³⁴ But someone drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel between the sections of his armor. The king told his chariot driver, "Wheel around and get me out of the fighting. I've been wounded."

- Did Ahab succeed in defying prophecy by disguising himself? Did he die by chance? No.
- We can know and trust God by his prophetic word.

Antinomy & Paradox



The reality is that you and I have been created as free agents yet we are also subject to the sovereignty of God.



Jean-Francois Lyotard – “*The postmodern condition: A report on knowledge*”:

“Simplifying to the extreme, I define postmodern as incredulity towards metanarratives.”

- A leading proponent of Postmodernism
- An attack – there is no larger story

A “**metanarrative**” is any “large story” that pretends to give an all-encompassing explanation of anything, especially as over-arching story of **history** and life in attempt to legitimize some **version of truth**.

Os Guinness:

“Postmodernism is a set of ideas that has replaced modernism, another set of ideas which has tried to replace the Christian and Jewish faith.”

Gordon Pennington:

“Revelation created a foundation for understanding the world and that modernism added reason above revelation. But postmodernism rejects them both”

Os Guinness:

“The Christian faith believes in God, humanity, reason, progress... now much of this modernism belief but without God, reason without God, humanity without God, progress without God.”

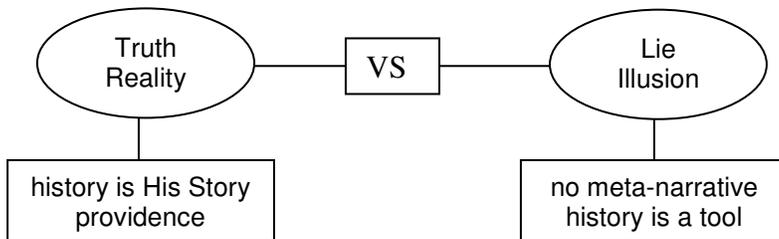
Ravi Zacharias:

“After you went through the period of the rationalists and then the empiricists, and then the existentialists, the rationalist is preoccupied with mind and truth, the empiricist with science and truth, the existentialist with feeling and emotion and truth. The postmodernist comes and throws all of them out.”

Gordon Pennington:

“Postmodernism suggest everyone tells their own story...that there is no real metanarrative to explain things. There is no truth system enduring enough to give us a satisfactory foundation for understanding our lives.”

The Battle Over History



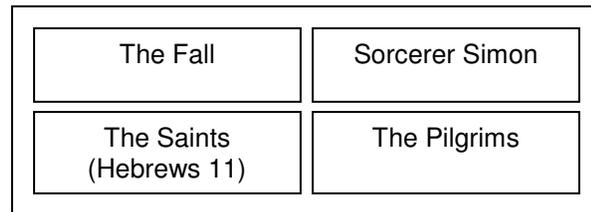
The Larger Story:

Natural **myopia**

Elisha's servant (2 Kings 6: 8-18)

God's **photo** album

Hebrews 11: those caught up in the larger story



Stepping Stones

Pilgrims – really a church relocation effort

The Pilgrim's Providential View of History – William Bradford, “Of Plymouth Plantation”:

“ But these things did not dismay them (though they did sometimes trouble them) for their desires were set on the ways of God, and to enjoy His ordinances; **but they rested on His Providence and knew whom they had believed.**”

Bradford's “History of the Plymouth Settlement, 1608-1650”:

“Last and not least, they [the Pilgrims] **cherished a great hope and inward zeal of laying good foundations**, or at least of making some way towards it, for the propagation and advance of the gospel of the kingdom of Christ in the remote parts of the world, even though they should be but **stepping stones** to others in the performance of so great a work.”

Whose Story?

If we truly see ourselves as part of His grand story, somehow our personal scripts seem to diminish and not to be as important...except for the script God is calling us to play.

Key Terms Lesson 6

Cocoon: Part of the worldview transformation process that Dr. Tackett describes: In order for a caterpillar to transform into a beautiful butterfly, it must undergo a struggle within a cocoon. Similarly, it is often a deep struggle to apply God's truth claims to the reality of our beliefs and circumstances; Del refers to this long and arduous process as "the cocoon" or a "cocoon experience."

Covenant: A formal and legally binding agreement. Biblically speaking, a covenant can be conditional or unconditional and can be established between God and an individual or group of individuals (such as a nation) or between men. Theologians list several such covenants including the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants.

Ex nihilo: From or out of nothing. Del is using this term in the context of knowledge; we know 11 is representative of the number eleven based on past teaching, we don't recognize that this is an eleven "ex nihilo," without some historical context.

Free agents: The human nature of free will, allowing individuals to make decisions, as opposed to behaviorism, where man is merely a stimulus-response mechanism.

Historical revisionism: a process where history is altered or the past is reinterpreted in order to accomplish a particular agenda or objective. If you rewrite the past, you can make people believe whatever you want in the present. There is a large liberal agenda to rewrite history in order to leave Christian themes and God out of public academia.

Incredulity/Incredulous: Unable or unwilling to believe; skeptical.

Metanarrative: An over-arching story, philosophy or worldview that seeks to explain reality. Postmodernism denies the credibility of any metanarrative.

Myopia: Nearsightedness; the condition which the human eye cannot see distant objects clearly.

Natural Myopia: A sickness we all suffer from, where we have a tendency to see our own little story very well, but we lose sight of the larger story of God.

Of Plymouth Plantation: The most complete story of the Pilgrims and the early years of the colony they founded. Composed of journal writings by William Bradford recounting the *Mayflower* voyage and their settlement in early America.

Paradox: A statement, proposition, or situation that seems to be absurd or contradictory, but in fact may be true; something that is contrary to or in conflict with conventional or common opinion.

Passover Feast: Instituted so that the Israelites would remember God's deliverance from the Egyptians. Most feasts were instituted by God to help His people remember a particular event when God worked in a powerful way. Exodus 12:24-27, Deuteronomy 4:9, 6:4-12

Pontius Pilate: The prefect (governor) of the Roman province of Judea from 26 AD until 36 or 37 AD during the reign of emperor Tiberius Caesar. As prefect, he was responsible for the estates in Tiberius, collecting taxes and maintaining order. Pilate is most commonly known for ordering the crucifixion of Jesus.

Providence/Providential: wisdom, guidance, and control provided by God; involving divine insight or intervention.

Sovereign: Having supreme authority or power. In the context of God's role in history, He is in ultimate control, fulfilling His purpose, and carrying out His plan.

Stepping Stones: People who are lost in the larger story of God; "they [the Pilgrims] cherished a great hope and inward zeal of laying good foundations ... even though they would be but stepping stones to others in the performance of so great a work."

The Larger Story of God: Del uses this phrase to describe God's grand story in which He is sovereignly in control. God's people should be focused on living as part of God's story instead of their own little story.

William Bradford (1590-1657): The leader of the Pilgrim settlers and Governor of Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts. He was a signer and the primary architect of the Mayflower Compact and author of the writings that formed *Of Plymouth Plantation*. He is also credited for the very first Thanksgiving.