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THE CHRISTIAN STUDY OF HISTORY

There is great value in the study of history, as a help to the promotion of the cause of Christ, but it is a value which few history teachers attain, because they make history an end in itself. I am very strongly of the opinion that we must always make exegesis primary. It is God's revelation that is important, rather than what we observe in history. History is helpful to us as giving illustrations of the way that God has worked, and of the way that men have failed. It is extremely useful as illustrative materials, and for alerting us to questions and problems, the answers which must be sought through careful exegesis of the Bible. It is for this reason that up to the present point I have never had any enthusiasm about trying to secure a full-time man for Church History. I feel that it is vital that a man in Church History be greatly interested in exegesis, and that his exegetical interest pervade his whole approach to history.

It is my conviction that if you can study history in this way, keeping the exegetical approach and background primary, it can be of great value, but that if it becomes primary itself, it is almost impossible to avoid going off into points of view that are contrary to God's will.