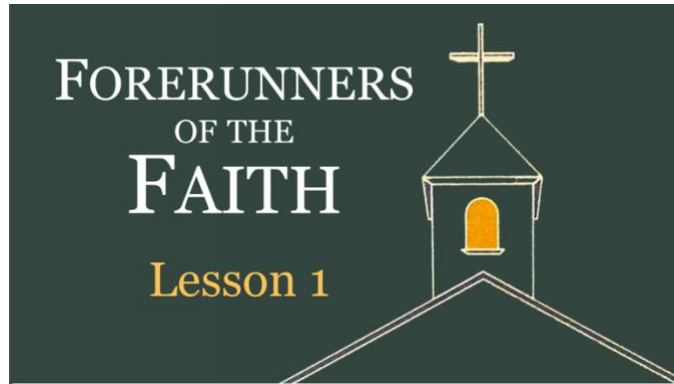


Forerunners of the Faith



Church History Framework

Ten Reasons to Study Church History

1. Studying church history is important because most contemporary Christians don't know much about it, but they should.
2. Because God is at work in history. Equally, history is a testimony to God's sovereign providence.
3. Because the Lord Jesus said he would build his church period to study church history is to watch his promise unfold.
4. Because church history is our history. As believers, we are members of the body of Christ and part of the bride of Christ.
5. Because sound doctrine has been guarded and passed down by faithful generations throughout history.
6. Because just as we are encouraged by the history of truth, we are also warned by the history of error. This enables us to be equipped as apologists.
7. Because we have much to learn from those who walked with God.
8. Because just as we can learn from the good examples of faithful Christians, we likewise have much to learn from those who failed at various points.
9. Because studying the past helps us understand the resources, opportunities, and freedoms we enjoy in the present.
10. Because history gives 21st-century Christians a right perspective about their own place in the church age.

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The Biblical Framework

I. Picturing the Church as a Building

- 1 Corinthians 3:9-11
- Ephesians 2:19-22
- 1 Peter 2:4-5
- Matthew 7:24-25

II. Three Doctrinal Pillars

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

A. The Supremacy of the Word of God

- 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- Mark 7:5-13

What about Apostolic Tradition?

Certain segments of broader Christendom, like Roman Catholicism and eastern orthodoxy, elevate religious tradition to a level of authority equal to scripture.

To justify their elevation of religious tradition, they point to verses in the New Testament that speak of Apostolic tradition:

- 1 Corinthians 11:2
- 2 Thessalonians 2:15
- 2 Thessalonians 3:6

While these verses mention the word “tradition,” do they really justify the non-biblical traditions that developed over the centuries in church history?

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1. The word tradition comes from a Greek word that means _____.
The Latin word, *traditio*, means _____, and it is from that Latin word that we get the English word tradition.
2. Apostolic tradition has been preserved for us in the writings of _____.
When we read the New Testament, we find exactly what the apostles taught.
3. Believers are instructed, by the New Testament, to evaluate all teachings and traditions in light of _____.
4. The early church viewed the writings of the apostles as inherently _____.
They understood that any non-biblical traditions must be evaluated against the standard of scripture.

B. The Sufficiency of the Work of God

The biblical gospel asserts that sinners are justified before God on the basis of _____ (Luke 18:14).

Salvation is the gift of God received through faith, apart from our works, based solely on the finished work of Christ.

- Galatians 1:6-8
- Romans 11:6
- Ephesians 2:8-9
- Philippians 3:8-9
- Titus 3:4-7

C. The Sanctity of the Worship of God

The true church worships the triune God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) in both purity of _____ and purity of _____.

- John 4:23

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1. Purity of Devotion

Undefined worship is reserved for God alone. It removes _____ and rejects _____.

- Exodus 20:4
- Isaiah 42:8
- 2 Kings 18:4
- 1 Corinthians 10:14
- 1 Thessalonians 1:9
- 1 John 5:21
- Revelation 22:8-9

2. Purity of Doctrine

Undefined worship requires an accurate view of _____.
To reject or distort the truth about who God is, as he has revealed himself in his word, is to worship the wrong God.

- 1 John 2:22
- 1 John 4:2-3
- 1 John 5:20
- 2 John 7
- John 1:1 – Jesus’ Deity
- John 1:14 – Jesus’ Humanity
- John 1:17 – Jesus’ Messiahship

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Doctrinal Pillars

1. **The Word of God (in Scripture):** The true church views Scripture alone as its final authority.
 2. **The work of God (in salvation):** The true church understands that sinners are justified solely by God's grace through faith on account of Christ.
 3. **The worship of God (in spirit and truth):** The true church worships the Triune God in purity of devotion and purity of doctrine.
- 2 Timothy 1:13-14

