

Why History is Important

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Witness & Power of History

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Why History is Important Historical Continuity

Witness and Power of History

It does not pay to underestimate the power of history.

Historians, historiographers and biographers are merely tour guides who research and collect information left behind and present it to readers. They penetrate the guesses and gropings, the perhapses and maybes. They investigate and analyze the counterfeits, substitutes, myths, falsehoods and red herrings. Relentlessly, they research, detect and unearth events and truth buried in the graveyard of the past. Focusing on a particular subject, they arrange events that occurred over time into a narrative, usually in chronological order.

Authors, journalists, researchers, investigators, etc. have generally concluded that a narrative is incomplete unless it answers six questions: who, what, when, where, why and how (commonly referred to as the *Five Ws and One H*). Omitting any one of these questions can leave a gaping hole in a narrative. The book **Preserving the Truth** answers all these questions.

The words we speak, the words we read, and the sentences we write reverberate with the voices of those who preceded us. Some past events are celebrated; others are concealed, pending discovery by diligent searchers and truth seekers. History proclaims advancements, achievements, successes and triumphs; it also lays bare tragic blunders, foolish missteps, dark secrets and skeletons.

Regrettably, history is often undervalued, overlooked or dismissed. However, without the past, the present cannot be *fully* understood. For example, without knowledge of the Old Testament background and prophecies, one is unable to fully comprehend or appreciate the New Testament and the arrival of Jesus Christ.

The Old Testament records in detail not only the many blemishes, stains, sins and evil deeds of God's people, but also affirmations of God's faithfulness to them. Imagine the loss if the instructive, fascinating histories of Adam and Eve, Noah, Jacob, Moses, David, Solomon, Ruth, Nehemiah and Samuel, to name just a few, had not been included in the Bible.

Early on, Moses relayed God's instructions to the Jews that their history must be kept alive forever. "Only take heed and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things your eyes have seen and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children" (Deut. 4:9; Ex. 13:3–10).

Remembering sustained their survival as a nation, as God's chosen people. When they remembered their history, things went well; when they forgot, they paid dearly. Their memories told them how and who delivered them (God), what to do, when and where. By remembering their yesterday, the Jews discovered the meaning of their today and the goal of their tomorrow. Knowing and passing on their nation's special history was very important. God ordained several commemoration celebrations that Jews continue to observe annually on special days.

If the Two by Two Church leaders had acknowledged the legacy of their past history and founder and passed it down to succeeding generations as the Jews and Luke did (Luke 1:1–4), there would have been no need for this book to be written.

Why Historical Facts are Important

Reasons a clear knowledge of historical facts are important in any context:

- To preserve historical truth, understand how and why something began, progressed and arrived where it is currently; to be aware of shared roots; to know the history of one's ancestry, tribe, race, nation, religion or culture can provide deep and meaningful insights into oneself.
- To avoid repetition of errors and reinventing the wheel; to build on the framework of past knowledge and apply lessons learned for an improved future.
- To gain invaluable insight through hindsight; to fill in gaps, reasons and understanding; to provide clarity and sense.
- To more fully appreciate and value the individuals who lived in the past, e.g. their contributions, victories, achievements, challenges, setbacks, hardships. To be aware of the past fosters empathy, compassion, inspiration, gratefulness, praise and joy.
- To understand the true causes, contributing factors and consequences of the history and development of one's spiritual beliefs and methods; to provide a sense of spiritual stability and to contribute to believers becoming more "rooted and grounded" in their

faith (Eph. 3:17).

Value of Skepticism

Prove all things; hold fast that which is good (1 Thess. 5:21).

Skepticism is suspended judgment, an attitude of doubt. It is an approach that subjects all knowledge claims to scrutiny with the goal of sorting out true from false claims. A skeptic ponders. Truth is a skeptic's foundation for belief.

Learning about shocking news or painful disappointments that challenge or contradict current beliefs can create cognitive dissonance (when a person's beliefs do not align with facts). Skepticism is the natural, rational result that leads to questioning, searching for facts and reconciling beliefs so they conform with truth. (See Cognitive Dissonance below.)

A skeptic does not spontaneously trust, does not believe an authority without proof, does not accept anecdotal stories or personal experiences as reliable indicators of truth. In two words, the skeptic's position is: "Prove it." Without indubitable proof, claims are merely unfounded beliefs, opinions or preferences. A skeptic wonders, "why, who says, how do you know, what does that mean, where is it written, when was it said?" and more (Five Ws and 1 H).

Skepticism is healthy and wise. Great teachers promote skepticism. The Bible encourages it, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good" (1 Thess. 5:21). Suspending judgment while investigating facts can prevent harm, e.g. jumping to unwarranted conclusions, unnecessary hurt, misplaced anger, needless heartache, missteps, errors or misunderstandings, to name a few.

Those who possess the facts and know the truth should welcome the skeptic and be more than willing to provide it. Such sharing can be meaningful, valuable and rewarding. The truth has nothing to hide.

A universally acknowledged truth is that all things on Earth have a beginning, and the Two by Two Sect is no exception. It is natural for humanity to question where something or someone came from; to want to establish reference points of cause, source and origin.

This website reveals that:

- There were no Workers in any countries prior to 1897.
- There were no Fellowship Meetings or baptisms prior to 1902.
- There were no hymns written by Workers or Friends prior to 1897.
- The Two by Two Sect published no hymnal prior to the *Go-Preacher Hymn Book*, circa 1906.

Skeptical readers who remain doubtful that the Two by Two Church and Ministry did not exist prior to the twentieth century are encouraged to independently locate the following items **predating 1897:**

- A hymn written by a Friend or Worker
- A Two by Two hymnbook
- A photograph or name of a Worker or Friend
- A letter written by a Friend or Worker
- A Two by Two Convention announcement or speakers list
- A Two by Two Workers List
- Any notes from any Two by Two gathering/assembly
- A group that met in homes with pairs of itinerant ministers

As information, the printing press was invented in 1450; the first typewriter was invented in 1868; photography was invented in 1839; and the Kodak camera came on the market in 1888. All these reproduction options were available before 1897 and could have provided some of the above.

The complete absence of *any* earlier evidence of the above items is very telling. From a historiographic perspective, their absence is a "smoking gun." This is one of those times when absences speak louder than words. The inescapable past is part of the present—when it speaks and when it is silent.

At this late date there are no living primary witnesses with empirical knowledge of the Two by Two Sect's early days. However, many members left behind recorded eyewitness accounts and correspondence, e.g. William Irvine , John Long , Alfred Magowan , Joe Kerr, Ed. Cooney, Goodhand Pattison . There were also numerous secular eyewitnesses, e.g. reporters, journalists and legal court documents.

The history presented on this website is supported by extensive and diverse contemporary accounts, recollections, letters, notes, essays, photographs, public records, newspaper articles, books, ship passenger lists, census and genealogical records, etc., all dated *after* 1897. Most of these documents are easily accessed on this website.