

LESSONS FOR TODAY FROM MISTAKES OF THE PAST

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INTRODUCTION

- Our students often study history to pass exams. They are not the only ones guilty of this.
- We should study history in order to serve God better in our generation.
- A good example of this is 1 Corinthians 10:6–12. It gives us mistakes of the past to learn from.
- It is easy to refuse to apply this to today's theme because Paul was quoting sacred history.

- That is a mistake because all history is God's story. His moral government rules over all of history.
- "If we do not learn from the mistakes of the past, we are doomed to repeat them."
- Looking back in history helps us...
 - To avoid the mistakes of the past.
 - To be challenged to work harder.
 - To have a long-term perspective on life.
- I will avoid specific historical examples to avoid unnecessary offence

WHY BIBLE COLLEGES

- Most Bible Colleges begin with a felt need within a denomination or by a Christian leader.
- The need is for more and better-equipped preachers and teachers of the Word of God.
- This is often a doctrinal need, i.e. the conviction that what we believe is true (and will produce biblical ethics) and yet there are too few teachers teaching this.
- Thus a college starts, with funding from those who espouse the same passion and doctrine.

MISTAKES OF THE PAST

1. De-linking from the life of the local church and thus becoming more and more academically ethereal (academia for the sake of academia)
2. Yielding to pressure from society to accept new views (e.g. evolution) and ethics, especially in the area of sex (e.g. roles of gender).
3. The tendency for visionaries to grow colleges so fast that they outpace their support base.

4. The diminishing numbers in enrolment in Bible colleges has led to unhealthy competition with other colleges instead of a spirit of cooperation.
5. In an effort to grow numbers and thus keep financially afloat, Bible colleges have tended to increase their non-residential or long distance (correspondence or online) studies or become general liberal arts colleges.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

- The key to maintaining biblical ethics in the midst of these pressures is to remain linked to pastors.
- It is also to maintain healthy consultation and cooperation rather than unhealthy competition among Bible colleges.
 - Consultation and cooperation indirectly remind us of our reason for existence.
 - Consultation helps us to learn “best practices” from one another.
 - Cooperation enables us to share resources, especially human resources.

FINAL PERSONAL REFLECTION

What kind of pressures are you experiencing today and what compromises in ethics (attitudes and behaviour) are beginning to happen in you and your institution?