



Sermon Discussion Guide for Cumberland Fellowship Church Sermon Series: Biblical Pattern Church History – Week 3 (May 7, 2023)

*This guide is a supplement to the weekly sermon. We encourage families and groups to use it. When we hear God's Word, we need to do more than listen. The bible says, "Be doers of the word, not hearers only" (James 1:22). Step 1: **GATHER** with your family or group. Step 2: **REVIEW** and **DISCUSS** the key points and scriptures from the sermon. Step 3: **PRAY** for the prayer requests shared by your family or group.*

DISCUSSION STARTER

Our faith is an ancient faith, based on timeless truths, and we are called to live it out in the present. Wisdom would lead us to learn from church history, to understand those who have fought the battles and learned the lessons before us. How does learning from church history help us carry out our duties and live for Christ more effectively?

DIGGING DEEPER 1

The Drift Away from The Biblical Mandate. Constantine ordered basilicas and cathedrals to be built. What 2 movements away from our true Biblical Mandate did this create? Constantine didn't want Easter to be celebrated on the Jewish Passover, because he said he didn't want anything related to the ones who murdered Jesus. What did this lead the church to become? How did the church's identity change? Emperor Theodosius waged war on paganism and started tearing down pagan temples, banning all pagan rituals. While this was an incredible victory for Christianity, what did it cause?

DIGGING DEEPER 2

The Christian Middle Ages (590-1517). Christianity changed drastically during the Middle Ages. It's important to remember that now that the Government ruled Christianity, church and state were combined, there was so much influence that wasn't biblical happening within the church. Look up the following and contrast them against scripture (some scriptures are provided, but there are many more). Purgatory and Indulgences/the Treasury of Merit (1 John 2:1-2; Heb. 10:14-18). Veneration of Saints and Prayers to Saints (Romans 8:34; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 4:14-16; 7:23-25; 1 John 5:14). From their foundation to their summit, the whole structure of these doctrines is unfounded biblically.

DIGGING DEEPER 3

Roman Catechism. According to the Roman Catholic catechism, the Catholic Church relies on the authority of church tradition for their doctrines not found in the Bible. Compare and contrast the following against Scripture: Equality of Church Tradition and Scripture (2 Tim. 3:16; Rev. 22:18-19). Infallibility of the Pope (Luke 4:8; Psalms 18:31). The Perpetual Virginity of Mary (Matthew 13:55-56). Sacraments (Rom. 3:28; Eph. 2:8-9). The Roman Catechism is not biblical and, in fact, contradicts Scripture in many respects. Once the teachings of man are elevated to the same level as the Word of God, error naturally follows. No man, whether priest or Pope, is divine. Only the Holy Scriptures, inspired by the Holy Spirit, are divinely authoritative (1 Corinthians 2:12-13; 2 Peter 1:21). No man-made teaching, including the Catholic catechism, is on the same level with the Bible. Discuss how these changes still affect the Church today?

DOING THE WORD

Read Jude 1:3. Paul says that he seeks the approval of God and not man. "If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ." Think about the way you live your life. If someone were to watch and observe how you lived, day and night for one week, what evidence would show them that you seek to please God and not men, that you follow scripture alone and not tradition? What evidence would show them the opposite? What does this tell you about the way you are living your life? Sam said, "Only 47% of Americans say they are active attenders of a church. We are not a churching nation any longer. Those who actively attend church in America are in the minority. What we are doing isn't working, we need a change, and we will do our part to be that change." Pray about your part in this change. What are you willing to do to get yourself and the Church back onto God's path?