

God's Governance in Grace and Judgment in Man's History

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The theme before us—"God's Governance in Grace and Judgment in Man's History"—certainly merits a place on the program of a World Seminary Conference concerning itself with curriculum construction and coordination. The theme points to a foundation truth on which all worthwhile knowledge on this earth must rest and around which every Seminary effort to impart knowledge must revolve.

At the same time the theme suggests the essential role that branch of theological study plays which especially describes and details God's governing in grace and judgment in man's history, namely, historical theology. By the undergirding and synthesizing contributions of historical theology the best outcomes of other branches are enhanced as those outcomes are brought into harmony with the truth that God's grace and judgment are the factors that make man's history.

The importance of the theme for curriculum construction in general and for a program of history studies in particular has long been recognized in our ecclesiastical and educational circles. The old monograph on teaching history for Christian elementary school teachers declared: "We believe that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ holds the destiny of all peoples in his hands and he so directs their course that even the doings of the ungodly, unconscious to themselves, must contribute to his glory and the welfare of his kingdom." A whole generation and more of our teachers memorized and applied that parallel to our theme in order to function as good history teachers in our elementary schools. Current catalogs and handbooks of our prep schools indicate a similar aim in their history teaching. Michigan Lutheran Seminary says of its history offerings:

The history courses ... are dedicated to the premise that God rules the world and church in judgment and grace that his will might be done. This theme is constantly emphasized as Ancient and Medieval History is presented to freshmen; Modern to sophomores; and American to juniors.

Northwestern Prep School in a handbook recently published all lists as the first of the general objectives of its history department these three items:

1. To lead the student to see history as the unfolding of God's plan of salvation in Christ for mankind.
2. To lead the student to see the grace of God in the spread of the Gospel through the agency of his Church during the course of history.
3. To lead the student to see God's governance of the course of history in the interest of his Church.

The high school commitment to the theme of this essay is matched by one on the college level. In the course of its major curriculum reconstruction about ten years ago, the D.M.L.C. social studies department adopted a "Statement of Objectives" that includes these statements:

Although this world was created in perfection for man, it is no longer man's ultimate goal. As a consequence of sin, the meaning of human history, culture, and society must now be viewed in the light of God's plan of salvation through Jesus Christ, Ephesians 1:9-10.

We therefore do not find in the social studies a witness to the inevitability of human progress and the perfectibility of man but are confirmed in believing that our Lord Jesus Christ holds the destiny of all people in his hands, and he so directs their course that even the doings of the ungodly, unconscious to themselves, must contribute to the glory and the welfare of his Kingdom.

The approach to history advocated in our theme prevails at the Mequon Seminary as well. The major historical writing produced by a teacher at that seminary, even if at another location, Koehler's *Kirchengeschichte*, contains in its opening paragraph these thetical statements:

Die Hauptsache für die kirchengeschichtliche Erkenntnis ist das Walten des Evangeliums. Wo immer sich das findet, auch bei den Sekten, da gilt es, das zu erkennen. Überhaupt gilt es zu verstehen, wie Gott auf Erden durch das Zusammenspiel aller Kräfte seinem Evangelium immer wieder Raum schafft, dass es in grösserer oder auch geringerer Klarheit an die einzelnen Herzen kommt und da in unsichtbarer, aber effektiver Weise an dem gesamten grossen Leben der Welt zu dem Zweck mitwirkt, dass der Herr seine erwählte Gemeinde aus allen Völkern, Sprachen und Zungen sammelt, ihr und durch sie sein Evangelium bewahrt und erhält auf den grossen Tag Jesu Christi.

Sixty years have passed since Koehler penned that summary of the aim of history teaching at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. History teachers have come and gone at Mequon since then. The quality of the teaching has deteriorated but the aim has remained constant. In the Mequon self-study under way during this school year, the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Church History Department, quoting the school's catalog, says of the objectives of its offerings that they are:

to guide the students "to note how our God and Savior has ruled in grace and judgment amidst all that has happened in world history since our Lord's Ascension to the present time" and "has made everything serve his one great purpose of gathering his church of believers through the Gospel from among all nations."

The current Mequon self-study has included in the statement of church history objectives these specific attainments in the student:

to recognize joyfully the spread of the Gospel over the globe and across the centuries as God's effort to save sinners; and
to trace the role of the church and the churches in this endeavor.

What all these statements of purpose in history teaching add up to is a remarkable unanimity of opinion reaching across the whole spectrum of our church body's educational endeavor from the grades to the seminaries. What all agree on is that history and church history teaching has to do with "God's Governance in Grace and Judgment in man's History." This point is made and elaborated on at the outset to indicate the basic purpose and main tendency of this paper.

Even if the essayist had a flair for the imaginative and unique in curriculum construction, he would not want to bring any novel suggestions for history teaching at our seminaries. His purpose is to point to consensus and convention as the reliable guideline. The hope is that in young and in infant seminaries in distant places with strange sounding names, history and church history studies will busy themselves in the first and the last instance with "God's Governance in Grace and Judgment in Man's History." That thought and theme will be dealt with in the paper under three rubrics:

- I. As Theme in the Bible
- II. As Theme in All History
- III. As Theme in Our Seminary History Courses

I. As Theme in the Bible

Our best authority for emphasizing the truth of God's governance in judgment and grace in all of our history study is the Bible. The Bible itself endorses this approach by precept and by example. For precept we could turn to any number of Bible passages but especially outstanding among them is the first chapter of Ephesians which sings the praises of that gracious God whose purpose it is:

that in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in him:
whom he raised

from the dead and set... at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Thus the Bible describes the theme of history and fills in its bottom line.

For the Bible's example of the emphasis on God's governance in grace and judgment in all history one can turn to its first page, its first verse. God does not begin his saving self-revelation with a detailed doctrinal dissertation on his ontology and attributes. He simply tells us what he does in his love for man. Genesis 1:1 sets the Scripture pattern. The greater portion of the Bible consists of the narrative of God's governance in grace and judgment in man's history. Most of the remainder is elaboration or explanation or application of that narrative.

It is true that a modern *Heilsgeschichte* approach to the Scripture can lead astray when it elevates certain narrative Bible sections to a superscripture position and relegates the rest to the realm of the unimportant and inconsequential. That false view, however, should not influence any of us to the antipodal error of minimizing or overlooking the history emphasis in the Bible and the theme for history it sets.

What the Bible itself does, we do well to emulate in our history study and teaching. The overriding importance which Bible History has in teaching the very young and to which our own ancient experience testifies, need not and should not diminish with the progress and promotion that the years bring to the learner. For theological training in the historical discipline, in fact, that Bible emphasis on Bible history has every right and reason to predominate.

The historical panorama the Bible presents is familiar to all and need not be depicted in a detail. Let a few broad references to its wide vistas and viewpoints recall the rest. From Eden to Ararat the road is marked by monuments of God's love and man's sin, by relics of grace and of judgment as the long first act of this earth's drama sets the stage for those to come.

In the shadows of Ararat God's spokesman sketched the plot of what was to follow. The Semitic peoples would first have their day, their way, their sway. Then they would bring judgment on themselves. Their kingdom would be divided and given to Medes and Persians and other Japhetic nations.

So that grace might abound even more where sin abounded, God selected as bearers of his promise first a family and then the nation that grew from the patriarchs and their sons. Israel became the center of history, the seat of the Gospel. On the highway and at the crossroads of the Ancient World Israel's development and degeneration reenacted vividly this old interplay of grace and sin and judgment. The ungodly neighbors had every chance to follow the action and get the message.

The ungodly nations were in fact given a piece of the action. The biggest and best and worst of them became tools in the administration of God's grace and judgment. Each had its own role to play on the stage of world's history. Egypt served as cradle for God's chosen nation. The Philistines were its goad and spur to repentance. The Assyrians, like wolf on the fold, scourged and scattered the Lost Tribes. The Neo-Babylonians purged what was left. The Persians restored the remnant for temple building in both the lower and the higher sense of the term.

The Bible's Old Testament doesn't pay all that much attention to the isles of Greece. It doesn't have to. Its own New Testament letters and concepts and idioms testify eloquently to the mission and meaning of Greece in the everlasting plans of the loving God for the salvation of sinners and the edification of the saints. Rome's place in God's scheme of things may not be all that specifically spelled out in precise Bible passages but the events the Bible describes in connection with the mission of God's Son, our Savior and with the mission of his apostles identify that place most clearly in terms of grace and of judgment. Even the pagan Roman poet, writing twenty centuries ago, could point out his country's role as he penned this pseudo-prophecy (Aeneid VI, 851ff):

*tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento (haec tibi erunt artes), pacisque imponere morem,
parcere subiectis et debellare superbos.*

The Roman way of conquest and rule, peace and order and its significance for the first spread of Christ's gospel should be even more clearly grasped by us who read in the Scriptures about decrees of Caesar that roll into fulfillment ancient messianic prophecies and about appeals to Caesar that make possible Paul's pet mission project.

Let this brief sketch serve to emphasize how in the Bible itself God's governance in grace and judgment is presented as the theme that draws together in the Promised Messiah all that happens here on earth. That is the key truth that places into proper perspective for the believer the crude annals of the pharaohs and the ebb and flow of hegemony in the lands between the rivers. This is what gives meaning to the glory and grandeur of Greece and Rome and to their sin and shame.

As this Bible theme of grace and judgment serves to illumine and illustrate and interpret all history of the world and church, so the historical concern of the Bible can be turned to aid in the understanding of that very Bible. It may not be amiss at a curriculum planning meeting of this sort to call attention to the pedagogical potentials of an Old Testament isogogical course that would wrap around the historical event of the Babylonian Captivity the many major Old Testament writings that are related.

Prophets like Micah and Isaiah and Jeremiah could be read in the context of causation and their message might stand out the more clearly for it. Ezekiel, Daniel, Lamentations, along with pertinent sections of historical books, could serve to describe the actual event. Books like Ezra, Isaiah again, Haggai and Zechariah could be drawn on for a grasp of the restoration era.

Such employment of the Bible's own historical approach in the study of Bible books would certainly serve to clarify difficult content. It would provide each Bible book with a built-in historical setting and avoid the necessity of duplication and repetition. It would aid in unifying knowledge of the content of Biblical books around the Bible's own leitmotif of the gathering of all things in Christ Jesus.

While we may well want to point out the value of the historical approach also in Bible study, as we have been just doing, and while we may in other connections contend for a historical-grammatical or historical-exegetical theology, the main thrust of this paper obviously must be in the direction of the importance in the study of history of the great Bible truth that God governs in grace and judgment all of history. In the interest of that thrust we now turn from comments on history that the Bible itself narrates to post-Biblical history and to a consideration of our topic, "God's Governance in Grace and Judgment in Man's History."

II. As Theme in All History

Immediately the material becomes less clear and the task becomes less easy. We no longer have available to us God's own inerrant analysis of historical cause and effect. We view the contemporary scene, and sometimes also the past, through a glass darkly.

The problem is not with our basic view of history or with our heartfelt convictions about its meaning. These have their roots in God's own Word and truth. God has said that it is his will, in a verse quoted earlier, that "in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him."

That holds true for ancient eras and modern times and the ages between. That has to do with Russia as much as with Rome, with Carter as much as with Cyrus or Caesar. It would be the rankest error to assume that developments in China in the last generation are indication that raging heathen have broken God's control of events or that the King he set on his holy hill of Zion has abdicated his throne. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

For all nineteen centuries that have passed since the last Bible page was written God has woven history's pattern with the warp of his grace crossed by the woof of his judgment. Because the weaving process is not yet completed, we can not always discern every detail or surmise the whole. We are, nevertheless dealing with God's own pattern of things.

It is for us to stick with the essentials. We can be sure that what happens to the Gospel and through the Gospel is of vital concern and ultimate significance. The first centuries of the A.D. era are marked by the first rapid spread of the Gospel through the then known world. The medium is the *pax Romana* and the culture we

call classical. The message is the saving truth of the crucified and risen Christ. The missionaries are the first Christians, who carried the Gospel fast and far, even to the “borders of the setting sun.”

The world power that had been created to set the stage for this glorious era, however, became the Gospel’s scourge. For three centuries it bled the Gospel messengers without stopping its spread. “*Semen est sanguis Christianorum*,” the Christian spokesman defiantly declared. And in the end it was the message that triumphed and the medium that perished. Rome fell, not because of the causes Gibbon so laboriously enumerates, but because it brought God’s judgment on itself.

The Gospel suffered also because in its long struggle it sought respite in a truce with its oppressor and an alliance with its rival. The Gospel became enmeshed in the snare of religious politics and political religions. In that process the Gospel became the converse of itself, another gospel, a legal gospel, a gospel that was no gospel. Recovery and restoration would be long in coming.

For centuries the enfeebled and perverted message would have to eke out its existence far from the sun. The rising tide of Islam checked the Gospel’s spread. The emergence and the flowering of the Antichrist threatened its very life. The barbarian quest for *Lebensraum* drove the Gospel into the monastery. There in the cloister, amid so much that breathed an anti-Gospel spirit, the Gospel found a quiet chamber, a cradle for its slumber time. Preserved by the miracle of heavenly mercy, the Gospel gained renewed strength for the day of restoration and for the great leap forward.

In the meantime God was setting the stage for the Reformation in the world. Man was allowed to restore old civilizations and to follow new pathways. Kings and kingdom grew strong enough to check the naked power of the Antichrist. Even that ultimate perversion of church to be seen in the Crusades was allowed to make its contribution. Even the height and the heyday of Turkish power, that many thought spelled the doom of Christendom, under God’s governance played its part in setting the stage for the restoration of the Gospel.

The second greatest event in history, the greatest since the Savior’s birth, was the Reformation. The reborn Gospel of salvation dominated history for a century. It shaped all subsequent times. It touched off conflicts within countries and between countries, within churches and between churches. Mission rivalries and national rivalries aided the spread of Christianity. Black-robed priests went with armored conquistadors, both bent on conquest. Persecuted dissenters sought out havens across the seas and took with them on the journey their prized possession, their faith in the Gospel.

Perverted man once again almost succeeded in spoiling what had been achieved. In his pride and in his greed he denied the Gospel in thought, in word, in deed. Again God intervened in judgment and in grace. He shaped a revival of religious concern and Gospel commitment. He endowed the nations with material resources and mixed motives through the twin revolutions in the political and the economic realms. What resulted has been called “The Great Century” in the long story of the church’s expansion and the Gospel’s spread to the ends of the earth.

The Gospel was carried into the interiors of little known lands. It moved along on its ceaseless journey westward so far it once again reached the Orient. What was happening brought joy to believers on earth and to angels in heaven. It brings joy to devotees of history when they view that colorful nineteenth century in its true light, in the light of the Gospel and Gospel proclamation.

Again man could not stand prosperity. Before the century ran to its close, the best commentator on its colonial endeavors had to plead:

Lord God of Hosts, be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget! ...
For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard,
All valiant dust that builds on dust
And guarding, calls not Thee to guard,
For frantic boast and foolish word—
Thy mercy on Thy People, Lord!

Few paid heed. There was too much forgetting, too much boasting, too much idolatry of things. Judgment came—one World War, Depression, another World War, and Red Revolution. Our turbulent era, if it says anything at all to us, reminds us that time is running out and space is shrinking for efforts to preach the Gospel.

In this sweeping sketch of the Gospel's course through the history of the world, since the Savior's birth, the concern has been to travel fast and far, to give a bird's eye view without being distracted or misled by the untypical and unknown. That is not to say, however, that it is only in the most general study of history that the Gospel can be utilized as the prime factor in ascertaining causation and significance.

The single area and the single era have a history that is also determined by God's world government in grace and judgment. As details loom larger and as scope and range are narrowed, it is of course an easy matter, as the saying goes, to lose sight of the forest because of the trees. But that need not be the outcome.

A case in point is the homeland of most of us. The history of my country is so obviously an instance of God's governance that to view the story in any other light would simply amount to missing the better half of it.

Discovered—rediscovered, for the sake of the Scandinavian brothers just in time to provide an open land for the rediscovered Gospel, America offered a refuge for those persecuted for the Gospel and a proving ground for those who needed more spiritual breathing room. At the same time it could serve as a target of Counter Reformation drives.

According to all human calculation, the present United States should have become a Roman Catholic stronghold. Visible monuments to this early threat abound to this day in the area chosen for this meeting place. God saw fit, however, to turn the tables on Spanish and French ambitions and in the process transformed what began as a total commitment to strict religious establishment into a free land where a free church could flourish, if it wanted to.

Westward expansion, Manifest Destiny, and the frontier process all played their part in carrying the churches and the Gospel on the way West. The best pages of the story of the Oregon Trail are those that deal with such missionaries as DeSmet, Blanchet, Lee, and Whitman.

By the time of the closing of the Frontier, which the Census Bureau dated as 1890, even our church body had been led to realize the existence of a Frontier. In 1892 and 1893 it managed to find a spiritual frontier where one could still pioneer with the Gospel. "Better late than never," it said as it joined the ranks of the mission-minded churches of this land.

After 1890, however, the new frontiers loomed for the land and its churches overseas. That's where the action was. The pull of two World Wars and their aftermath succeeded in rousing even the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. The fruits are in evidence at this gathering. Unprecedented prosperity and a large place in the sun enable the United States of 1978 to serve as a launching pad for very energetic mission endeavors. American churches entrusted with the Gospel have opportunities such as have never been seen before under the sun.

When the history of a country or of the world is studied and taught with such a commitment to prime cause and teleology, the accusation is soon raised that the results are rigged and that the whole endeavor is unscientific and unsound. Those in our gathering who have had training in the so-called scientific history, which claims to deal only with the evidence that the gathered facts suggests, may even be harboring some misgivings of their own. They have no reason to.

Better methods of making and storing records, it is true, are supplying historians with more and more data and in some respects more reliable data, but all that hasn't really brought us one inch nearer a truly "objective" history. A computer can store historical facts by the million but it can't spew them out in a pattern unless it has been programmed in advance. An Arnold Toynbee can draw on a multitude of such facts for his large history but Toynbee needs a theme or a gimmick to cope with the facts at his disposal. It finally relates to how good or bad the predetermined factor, the unifying theme actually is. Toynbee's fans will opt for the view that what makes history is the human response to challenge. You and I have more reason to find our history theme in "God's Governance in Grace and Judgment."

This does not imply any “know-it-all” attitude on our part. This is simple trust in truths God has revealed to us. It is a humble trust, especially when confronted by bits and pieces of history that remain unknown quantities in relation to the larger pattern.

Nothing is more ridiculous or objectionable than the zealous would-be historian who imagines he sees God’s hand even when it isn’t there and who knows down to the minutest detail what God’s unrevealed purposes are. The earliest Puritan histories written in this land contain numerous examples. The *Journals* writer presumes to know that the reason for the Indian resort to the warpath was that God might bring judgment on Anne Hutchinson through the tomahawk. More recently equally zealous commentators have found some strange history in our most recent presidential election.

Such an approach is one we will want to avoid. The broad outline of history, its focal point, and its ultimate goal have been made plain for us. These can and should be the basis for our history, the pattern that orders and interprets events. Beyond that we need not go. We will be especially wary in dealing with contemporary events. Lacking a long perspective, we simply cannot cope with what happens today as easily as we can with what the passing centuries have clarified as instances of God’s Governance in Grace and Judgment in Man’s History.”

That truth, which has been treated as a theme in the Bible and in all history, is now to be viewed

III. As Theme in Seminary History Study

Let others stress a sociological or economic or philosophical or political side of history. They have certain reasons and may derive certain benefits. For men of God, however, only God’s own history will suffice, history as the Bible interprets and relates it, history that points to God’s dealing in grace and judgment with sinful men.

When our seminarians are trained in such historical study, they have at hand a tool to aid in understanding the Scriptures, which are themselves to a great extent history. At the same time such seminarians will be empowered to understand the world around them. They will know its origin, its tragedy, its hope, and its end. They will be more able proclaimers of the Gospel for it.

A stress on “God’s Governance in Grace and Judgment in Man’s History” in the historical theology departments of all our seminaries will contribute to that unity of aim and spirit that is a “consummation devoutly to be wished.” This is especially significant because of the undergirding and contributory role the historical discipline plays for all other branches of learning.

At this stage of our consideration it may be well to consider and contravene a mild dissent that may have been provoked. A stress on a unified history program at all our seminaries may well give rise to the concern that not enough attention and place is being given to individual differences. In this room are represented seminaries in five continents, each training men for ministry in their own areas, each of which has a distinct history of its own.

The point is worth making and should receive due, but not exclusive, attention. A reference to an aim in the recently developed description of Mequon’s church history program may be useful in this connection. That aim states that there should be developed in the student “a readiness to recognize the importance of certain key areas and eras in this historical panorama, specifically the Reformation and the American scene.”

The one item specifically mentioned, the Reformation, represents the unifying factor, the *conditio sine qua non*, the essential ingredient of the church or world history program of any Lutheran seminary, whether located in El Paso or Mequon, Japan or Zambia, the home of the Swedes in the Old World or the New. The Lutheran pastor, wherever he may serve, can’t be a Lutheran pastor without knowing Luther and the Reformation.

In the aim quoted a moment ago about certain key areas and eras, it is the “American scene” that represents the variable. At Mequon in church history study there is justifiable concern about ramifications in early New England theology and their impact upon subsequent developments, about the up and downs of Lutheran confessionalism in the United States during the past two centuries, about the conversations Bading and Hoenecke may have had in those memorable fall weeks in 1863 in the Watertown parsonage. To transfer

such concerns lock, stock, and barrel, however, to Lusaka would be the height of folly, the ultimate in pedagogical stupidity!

There is no need to belabor the twin point: there is an essential core in the history studies of any Lutheran seminary worthy of the name and there is room beyond that core for a variety suited to area needs. Keeping the right balance between the two is the chore. It is not an easy one and looms as one of the pitfalls in history curriculum construction to be considered at this point.

In all branches of theology and all areas of church life there is a great temptation for expatriate leaders to take the easy and thoughtless way of simply forcing on others what they themselves are used to. In America several Lutheran Indian mission efforts were all but ruined by an insistence on a singing of German chorales. Enough has been said, for you all are more aware of this problem than I am and will know how to meet it in building a church history program in your area.

The pitfall on the other side is produced by the current emphasis on "Third World Theology." In recent church history there have been instances where sound theology has been rejected because it came in an American or European wrapping. An outstanding example was the refusal at Bangkok five years ago to give even a hearing to Beyerhaus' "Frankfurt Declaration." None of us may be as radical as commissioners of the WCC's missions and evangelism division, but we all have a commendable local loyalty, commendable as long as it is kept in bounds.

Another pitfall to be avoided is an apathy about history study, discernable in so many phases of modern living. Our age is characterized by sweeping change and swift development. One might expect in a revolutionary time that the rational way might be to look to the past for lessons to guide future pathways. Instead it is either assumed that there is no time in the rush of events to look back in reflection or it is studied policy not to look back so as to have an unspoiled, fresh look to the future. Such attitudes may not be part and parcel of the thinking of people who are committed to confessional Lutheran theology, but they do feed an anti-history bias that can easily assert itself in such a theology.

In the concern to safeguard the confessional position, doctrinal precision and regulated homiletics and how-to pastoral practice seem to be the major concerns. In certain ways they are. If historical study suffers thereby, however, there may well develop a failing in the ready identification of erroneous tendencies of the day and in the right employment of means to combat them. The seemingly less practical discipline may turn out to be the most practical and useful of all.

This paper can conclude with some observations about construction of history courses at our seminaries. They can only be very general and very tentative, given the existent variables.

A major consideration is time. Building on strong high school and college history programs, Mequon believes that about one-sixth of the theology time should be devoted to historical theology. Where no such strong history preparation prevails, one would assume that the figure should be upgraded.

Of that time Mequon devotes about five-sixths to what could be termed general historical theology study and one-sixth to specific American emphasis. The implication should be obvious. One could neglect only with peril such church history aspects as Christianity's origins and developments, the Reformation, the Lutheran Confessions, and the churches in the modern world. These themes are indispensable ingredients in the spiritual fare of the Lutheran seminarian the world over. A modest amount of time is left over for specific studies suggested by the location of the seminary and the ministry it trains. That too is indispensable.

This essayist has little heart for suggesting specific course content for history programs at our seminaries around the world. For one thing, he knows so little about Third World affairs that even the hint of suggestions along that line would amount to a new high in intellectual arrogance. For another, this essayist has operated for thirty years in the classroom with the maxim that no one could really tell him what course content to teach but that he should instead develop his own course pattern and learning experiences.

Each of you, a master in his own field, should be able to develop what is needed in his classroom in the way of history programs. Where the story of the ancient world is not known, a survey of the B.C. era is

certainly in place as an aid to Old Testament understanding. There has been general reference to other essential course content throughout these pages. Let that suffice.

In conclusion, the plea is in place that at our seminaries around the world historical studies be given their due so that thereby the cause of the saving Gospel and of all seminary training might be furthered.