

BR: History of the Church Through the Ages (Lee Wildman)

History of the Church Through the Ages: From the Apostolic Age, through the Apostasies, through the Dark Ages, the Reformation and the Restoration by Robert H. Brumback

While teaching a class recently, some suggested that it can be helpful to know something about church history when it comes to reaching out to some of our neighbors. I didn't have time to read Philip Schaff's *History of the Church* or "The Search for the Ancient Order" by Earl West. So I pulled this volume off my book shelf that was given to me by a dear old sister in Marion in 2000. If you want a brief overview, I recommend it.

This led to reading a couple of other books:

- *The Legacy of Raccoon John Smith* by Everett Donaldson (of particular interest to me having lived in Mt. Sterling, KY from 1983-1986)
- *Daniel Sommer (1850-1940) a Biography* by William E. Wallace which is mostly a compilation of articles Sommer wrote in the *American Christian Review* (lived in Indianapolis his later years)

"History is the voice of the past, teaching by the follies, as well as by the wisdom, of our forefathers." (Donaldson)

Things Learned:

- Their dedication, sacrifices, zeal for the scriptures and evangelism is certainly admirable.
- Many of the issues they faced are still around today.
 - Institutionalism – missionary societies and their effect on churches, preachers and Christians in the work of personal evangelism; colleges (some of Sommer's concerns have been realized when we see what most of the colleges have become)
 - Concern about worldliness in the churches: dancing, gambling, drinking, entertainment choices, sexual immorality
 - One man pastor – preachers became pastors doing the work elders should be doing.
 - L.L. Pinkerton's liberal ideas went far beyond the introduction of the melodeon at Midway, KY in 1859 – he did not believe in the inerrancy of the Bible and was willing to accept the unimmersed into the church. "I will not thrust my translation of a Greek word between your conscience and your God." (I've heard similar things said in our day about instrumental music and supporting human institutions); he also wrote, "Jesus was, in all respects, pre-eminently the teacher; but was not a teacher of doctrines...." "The New Testament is not a code of cast-iron laws for trembling slaves; but a rule of life for loving children." (Sound familiar? No patterns?)

A related item of special interest to me:

Dr. Chester Bullard in Snowville, VA was coming to similar conclusions to those of Alexander Campbell before he had heard or met Campbell. He taught J.T. Showalter who had a tremendous influence on W.W. Otey. Otey and his wife had a daughter named Willie. She married a Phipps and they taught their son Bill who along with his wife, taught their son Darrell. Darrell taught his son Josh who is now teaching his sons, Ian, Jack and daughter Lily. I am blessed to be working with Josh and Cata and their 3 delightful children at Lakeview!