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LESSONS ON HISTORY

When I read a good history book or biography I wonder why I didn't do more of that throughout my life. I just finished *The Story of Baptists in the United States* by Pamela and Keith Durso and it provides wonderful insights into Baptists since their beginnings.

Three things leaped out at me from the book:

First, controversy has marked our history. There have been so many it would be hard to single one out. Our strong convictions and independent spirit were contributing factors. Sometimes, however, Baptists have seemed to enjoy a fight. The Fundamentalist-Modernist Battle in the 1920s and the 1930s had a devastating impact on Northern Baptists. Amzi Clarence Dixon, a pastor in Chicago said, "Above all things I love peace, but next to peace I love a fight, and I believe that the next best thing to peace is a theological fight." (p. 159)

Second, women have always been prominent in Baptist life as both preachers and deacons. Thomas Helwys, who along with John Smyth, founded the first Baptist church in Amsterdam, Holland, in late 1608 or early 1609, provided guidelines for church government, which included women deacons. (page 19) B.H. Carroll, who later founded Southwestern Seminary, set aside six women as deaconesses in 1865 when he was pastor of FBC, Waco. (*Texas Baptists: A Sesquicentennial History*; Leon McBeth, p. 79)

And in the 1700s, Daniel and Martha Marshall helped found numerous churches in the south. The Dursos wrote, "'Martha served alongside her husband and was noted for zeal and eloquence' and her preaching. In fact Martha was likely a better preacher than her husband." (page 53)

Of Lottie Moon, Southern Baptists' most famous missionary, the Dursos wrote, "While in China, Moon operated a girl's school, evangelized in villages, and cared for destitute women in their home. She taught Bible classes and preached on occasions."

In announcing her death, the *Foreign Mission Journal* quoted one of Moon's co-workers who called her "the best man among our missionaries." (pp. 128-9) Although she had misgivings about teaching men, she said she could not turn away men who yearned to be taught the Bible while "some young man among Southern Baptists in America who ought to be in China sat comfortably at home."

Third, evangelism and church planting has always been on the front burner of Baptist life. If history teaches us anything it ought to teach us that we need to stop fighting; set women free to minister; and stay at the task of winning the world to Christ.

QUOTE

- When asked what she considered the present seven wonders of the world to be, a student remarked: "To see, to hear, to touch, to taste, to feel, to laugh, to love." (Come to think about it, the great pyramids of Egypt run a distant second.)
- "I see God in every human being. When I wash the leper's wounds, I feel I am nursing the Lord himself. Is it not a beautiful experience?" Mother Theresa.

SERMON

Title	Five Requirements for a Church Revival
Author	Billy Kim, former president of the Baptist World Alliance
Text	Habakkuk 3:1-5
Introduction	He was living in a time of adversity. We need revival. Here is how it comes.
I	Prayer. "Revive thy work in the midst of the years." He prayed (vs. 1). Revival comes to a praying church. The Korean church is marked as a praying church. They are up at 4:00 a.m. every morning, 365 days a year, to pray, and then throughout the morning other prayer meetings. They agonize instead of organize. II Chronicles 7:14: "If my people..." We need a generation of praying pastors.
II	Preach the word. When John F. Kennedy was killed, the word went around the world in two hours. Our Savior was killed 2,000 years ago and half the world still has not heard that Jesus died or why.

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- III Purity. We need to be holy as he is holy. Unless we live pure before God, he is not going to send a revival. We need to be pure from immorality and from idolatry-the worship of things. The scriptures say, “Come apart and be ye separate...” Our body belongs to Christ...be not deceived, God is not mocked.
 - IV Praise. The earth is full of his praise. We praise the preacher and the choir, but how about God? Verse 3.
 - V Persecution. Verse 5. He talks about pestilence. We hope God can send revival without persecution, but oftentimes it does come. When it comes as in Acts 8, people are scattered.
- Conclusion Martin Luther said, “We need not lace priests’ hands with silver in order to gain access to the divine.” Seek God and revival will come.

LEADERSHIP

Mahatma Gandhi was a great leader who inspired people like Martin Luther King, Jr., to resist oppression with non-violence. Gandhi has no innate love of suffering and had been assertive in early battles for personal rights in South Africa after he was thrown out of a first-class compartment because of his skin color. Yet as he immersed himself in the sacred scriptures of Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, and Christianity, he became convinced that the humility of a servant is the one posture required by God. Only then did he strip off his European clothes, dispossess himself of material things, and seek companionship with the poor and suffering. He once was asked why he traveled third class. He replied, “Because there is no fourth class. A leader is only a reflection of the people he leads.” (Phillip Yancey, *Soul Survivor*, p. 157)

A WORD TO PASTORS

A recent study reported that 33% of ministers admit to having visited sexually explicit websites. Richard Baxter left to us sage advice when he said, “Spend your time in nothing on which you might not claim the blessings of God; in nothing which you could not review with a quiet conscience on your dying bed; in nothing which you might not be safely and properly doing if guests surprise you in the act.” We would do well to ask ourselves: is there any area in our life that would cause us great dismay if we saw it reported in tomorrow’s headlines?

ILLUSTRATION

In *The World is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century* by Thomas L. Friedman it states that the computer has made the world flat so that work can be done as easily and as quickly and much cheaper in India, China, and other places in the world as it’s done here in the United States, thus flattening the world. If America is to compete in this changing world, it must have the right kind of education to prepare people for the jobs of the future.

What kind of education do we need? He offers four suggestions:

- 1 We must learn how to learn. Find people who are excited about learning and learn from them.
- 2 To develop passion and curiosity. A person with a passion to learn and curiosity will achieve more than a person with little passion and higher IQ every day of the week.
- 3 You need to be good at managing or interacting with other people.
- 4 Computers or robots can do faster and cheaper many of the things that need to be done today. But things cannot forge relationships, tackle novel challenges, or see the big picture.

REMEMBER

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