

THE GOD WHO INTERVENES IN HISTORY

“Now I will arise,” says the Lord. Isaiah 33: 10

One of the things that interests me is how people I knew in public school are now interested in history. When I went to school with them, their attitude regarding history was pretty much, *“Gag me with a maggot!”* But now, they’re fascinated by some time period, or by what once happened in some place, or by someone’s biography, and they act like studying such history is the greatest thing since sliced bread.

And it’s not just the people I grew up with. I see this happening all over the place. For some reason, the more that we *“get on up there”* in age, the more we get interested in what happened *“back when.”* I think it’s great.

Obviously, an understanding of where we’ve been is helpful when it comes to understanding where we are and where we may be going. Maybe it should scare us, then, when some celebrity stands on the streets outside the recording studio and asks basic questions of passersby. *“How many commandments are there?”*...Uh, three? *“How many branches of government are there?”*...Uh, ten? *“Was there ever a war in Viet Nam?”*...Uh, no, but there’s a big theme park. Such answers do not inspire confidence.

But another reason that an interest in history is good is that ours is an historical religion, meaning this: Christianity is based upon God intervening in human history. God calls Abraham to leave home and to father a people through whom God will bless all people. God calls Moses to free Abraham’s people from slavery in Egypt. God sends Jesus, the long-expected Messiah, who turns out to be the blessing to all people promised to Abraham. (Genesis 12: 1-3)

If God acts in history, God acts in ways that involve us. One of my favorite explanations of what we’re to be doing as followers of Jesus is this: *“To determine where God is at work in the world and to join God there.”* Given that God intervenes in our lives in the home, on the job, at school, in our public life, governmental decisions, etc., there is no lack of ways to plug in to what God is doing. There is nothing in this life that doesn’t belong to God, nothing that escapes God’s notice.

Rev. David Currie invites us to join in what God is doing like this:

*God worked his purposes through
buck-passing Adam and Eve,
enterprising Noah, aloof Elijah,
stolid Abraham, diligent Ruth,
conniving Jacob, charming Esther,
placid Isaac, courageous Deborah,
egotistical Joseph, promiscuous Rahab,
stammering Moses, urbane Isaiah,
sorrowful Samuel, weeping Jeremiah,
boisterous David, cuckold Hosea,
and a host of other diverse persons.*

How and where do you fit in with God’s interventions in history? DJ