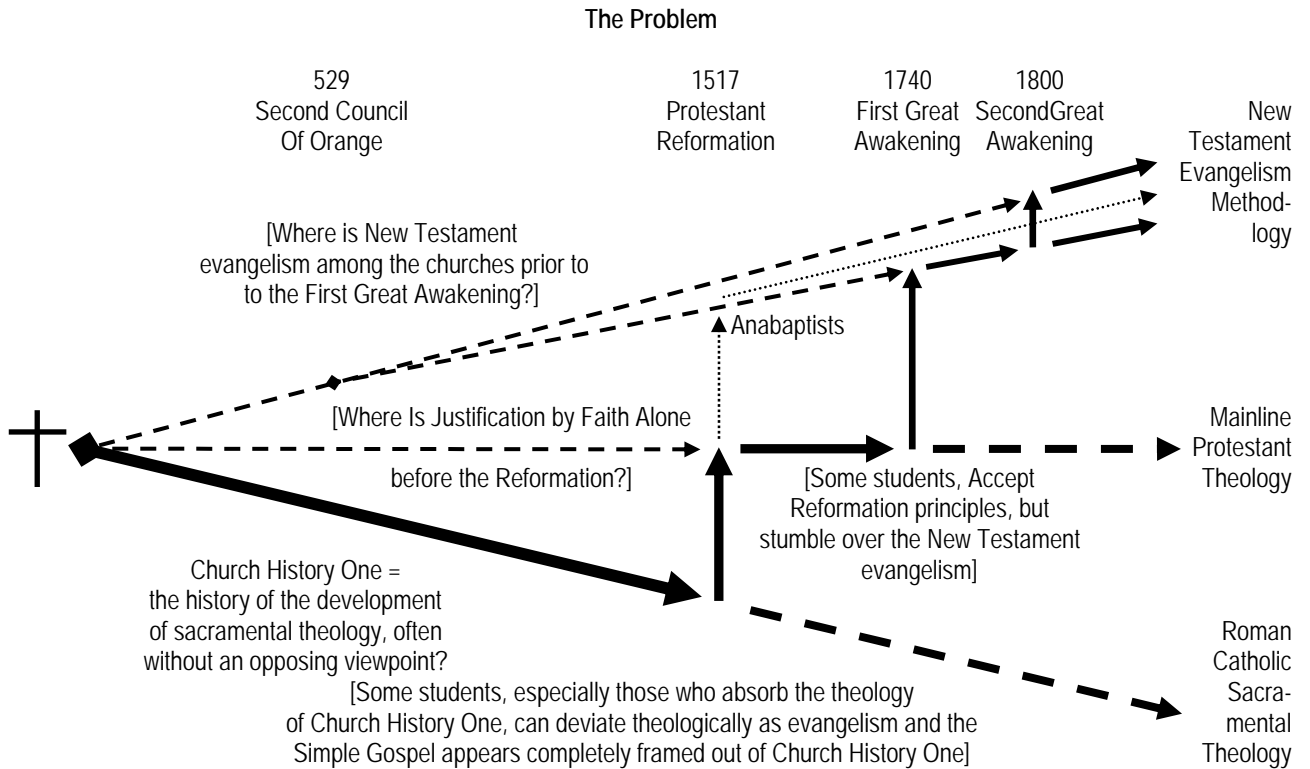


**Reverse Chronological Historical-Theological Tracks:
A Graphic Portrayal of Disconnects in the Study of the History of the Churches;
Or: The Stairstep Approach to Teaching the History of the Churches**



The solid black line attempts to portray the lines in which “Church History” is normally taught. Several questions emerge when the issues are considered:

Where are the New Testament churches prior to 1740, 1611, 1524, 1415, or 1380, or did they not exist? Likewise, was there New Testament evangelism prior to these dates?

Has not God reserved unto Himself, in the history of the churches, even the seven thousand that have not bowed the knee to Baal (cf. 1 Kings 19:18)?

Anabaptists, through whom a clear New Testament pattern emerged, have been marginalized, largely through the fallacy of composition, identifying Thomas Muntzer as the paragon of Anabaptists. These are denoted by a dotted line in the chart.

Likewise, the clear lines of cooperation and mutual support between the Alpine Waldenses and the Geneva Reformation are again blurred and ignored, forming a wall of separation between “Church History One” and “Church History Two” and muzzling the possibility of a pre-Reformation New Testament pattern.

This chart may also explain why it is difficult to maintain an Evangelical theological position if one studies deeply in the “Church History” prior to the Reformation. In fact, a “Church History One” class can be used to Romanize unsuspecting students, thereby turning them into janissaries. Consider:

Augustine (~A.D. 397-426): “All doctrine consists of things [objects] and signs” [*Omnis doctrina vel rerum est, vel signorum*], (*De doctrina Christiana*, bk. 1, c2, n2).

Peter the Lombard (~A.D. 1060): “All doctrine consists of things and signs” (*Four Books of Sentences*, bk 1, dist 1, c1, n1).

Thomas Aquinas: (~A.D. 1274):

“God is known by natural knowledge through the images of His effects” (*Summa*, FP, Q[12], A[12], Reply to Objection 2).

“But now we are speaking of sacraments in a special sense, as implying the habitude of sign: and in this way a sacrament is a kind of sign” (TP, Q[60], A[1], I Answer That).

“I answer that, Signs are given to men, to whom it is proper to discover the unknown by means of the known. Consequently a sacrament properly so called is that which is the sign of some sacred thing pertaining to man; so that properly speaking a sacrament, as considered by us now, is defined as being the ‘sign of a holy thing so far as it makes men holy” (TP, Q[60], A[2], I Answer That).