

Great Commission History?
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As Great Commission Christians, how ought we to educate ourselves about the history of the fulfillment of the Great Commission? Currently there are two required classes in Church History: Church History One and Church History Two. In order to receive an education more focused on the Great Commission, it appears that a seminary student must take elective classes, such as “History of Missions” or “History of Evangelism.”

Baptist history may consider the preaching of the gospel by Baptists, in the time period covered that class (from 1611 and forward). But the name “Baptist History” begs the question: is not Baptist history also a major part of Church History? Does segmenting out Baptist History as a separate class further remove the topic covered in that class from the rest of Church History? While a separate class in Baptist history is commendable, necessary, and important, it also important that Baptists and Baptism not be ignored in general Church History curricula.

Further questions also come to the fore:

- What is the church?
- How does one become a part of this church?
- For a Great Commission Church, does not the growth of the church primarily include conversion, then Baptism, and then the fulfillment of the Great Commission?
- How does this church grow, develop, and change?
- How does it relate to other churches that do not feel the same way about the fulfillment of the Great Commission?
- In fact, how do most Church History scholars view the Great Commission?
- Is the fulfillment of the Great Commission front and center in their teaching and writings?
- Further, do all churches in the history of the churches feel the same way about the fulfillment of the Great Commission?

- Is an “ecumenical” approach to teaching and writing about “Church History” possible, especially in light of varying views of conversion and the Great Commission?

There have been and are a wide variety of views about the fulfillment of the Great Commission in every Century of the church. And each view colors how Church History is approached, studied, and taught. Therefore it stands to reason, that as Great Commission Christians, we have a unique view of the history of the churches that is not necessarily shared by everyone who takes the name “Christian.”

As Great Commission Christians, should our classes in Church History One and Church History Two really not be too far removed from classes in “History of Missions” and “History of Evangelism”?