

How the Past Changed My Perspective

I can still hear Dr. Grant saying, “Worldview is the grid through which we see the world. Worldviews matter. Ideas have consequences.” These words will stay with me for the rest of my life. I have been asked which of my high school classes was my most difficult, and which was my favorite, and Dr. George Grant’s *Moral Philosophy of American Culture* fits both categories: my most difficult because I was loath to learn history at first, and my favorite because it changed my perspective.

Before ninth grade, I was hostile toward history of any kind. I don’t even remember most of what I read in those dull, dry history textbooks that made life like eating a cardboard sandwich. I only remember wondering why I had to study American history so many times. After all, I wanted to grow up to be something useful, like a missionary, or a veterinarian, to which history was entirely irrelevant.

Not surprisingly, I protested when my mother announced that I was taking Dr. Grant’s *Moral Philosophy of American Culture* class. My power of persuasion proved weak, however, and I was fated for a freshmen year of atypical projects and twenty-page exams. The first few months of this class were pure torture. Dr. Grant’s every word pained me, specifically the hand part of me, which was forced to take rapid notes to avoid failing weekly quizzes called “opportunities.” To put it plainly, I hated history.

However, during my first semester, I learned about the impact Byzantium’s fall had on Columbus, and the role the Scots-Irish Presbyterians played in the American Revolution. These things caught my attention, and I shut my mouth long enough to listen to what Dr. Grant was saying.

This is not to say that from that moment I was completely reeled in. To the contrary, I stubbornly refused to admit that I was beginning to like Dr. Grant's lectures; nevertheless, I was drawn by his words. At the end of each lecture, he brought everything into focus, comparing the present to the past, and demonstrating the lessons to be learned. Every time, the biggest lesson was that God is Sovereign, that man is fallen, and that Jesus Christ is the only way to bridge the gap created by man's sin.

Now, the subject of the past has once again transformed from a mere scholastic obligation into a calling on my life. Through history, God has called me to be something useful indeed: an historical writer. I aspire to write history textbooks for children, to try to impart to them the gift I received from my change in perspective.

Although I initially detested it, God changed my perception of history. I now understand the importance of the past; I understand that the way we see yesterday determines the way we see today. A correct view of history helps to put the present world into context. Though many things continue to shape the way I think, history was the channel through which God changed my perspective.