

SEEDS OF THE REFORMATION

1320-1415 AD

FIRSTSF 5.14.23

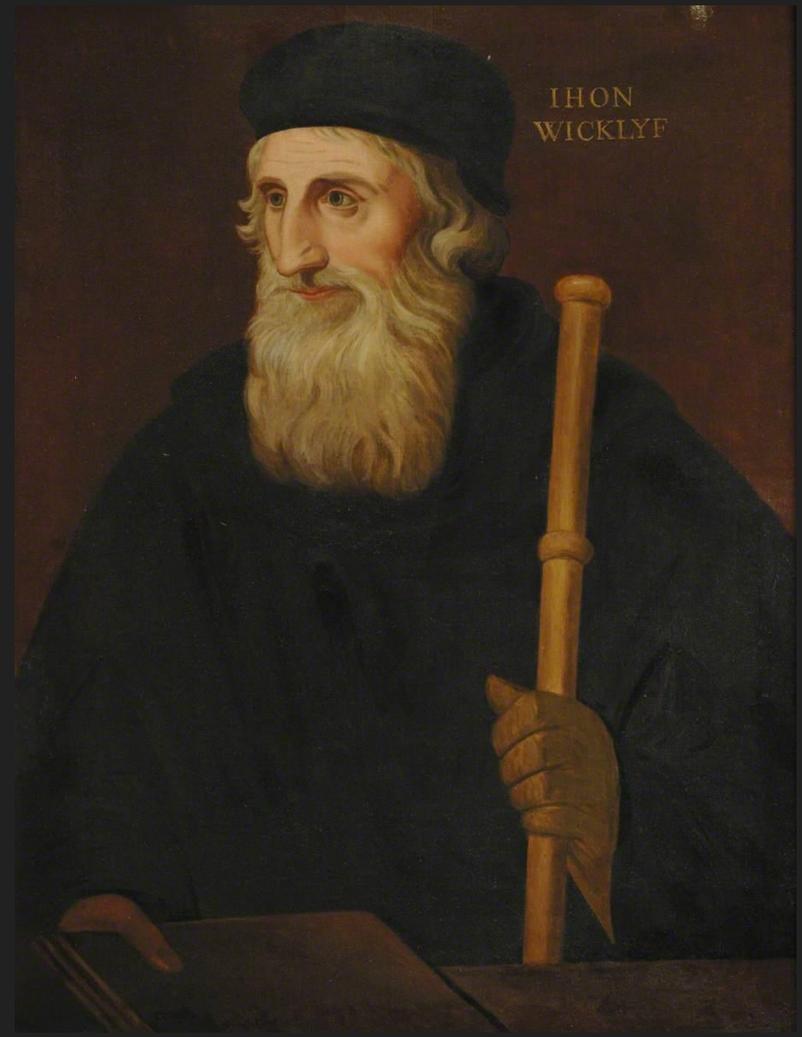


5 Solas of the Reformation

1. Sola Scriptura - “Only Scripture, because it is God’s inspired Word, is our inerrant, sufficient, and final authority for the church.”
2. Sola Christus - “The work of Christ, and Christ alone, is the basis on which the ungodly are justified in God’s sight.”
3. Sola Fide - “Believers receive the redemption Christ has accomplished through faith and faith alone.”
4. Sola Gratia - “Our salvation, from start to finish, is by grace and grace alone.”
5. Soli Deo Gloria - “All things are ultimately intended for a single purpose: glorifying God.”

John Wycliffe (1320s-1384)

- Often called the grandfather of the reformation or “the morning star of the reformation.”
- Entered Balliol College in Oxford in 1346. The following year, the Black Plague swept across Europe and wiped out about 1/3 of the English population.
- Translated the Bible from the Latin Vulgate into English.

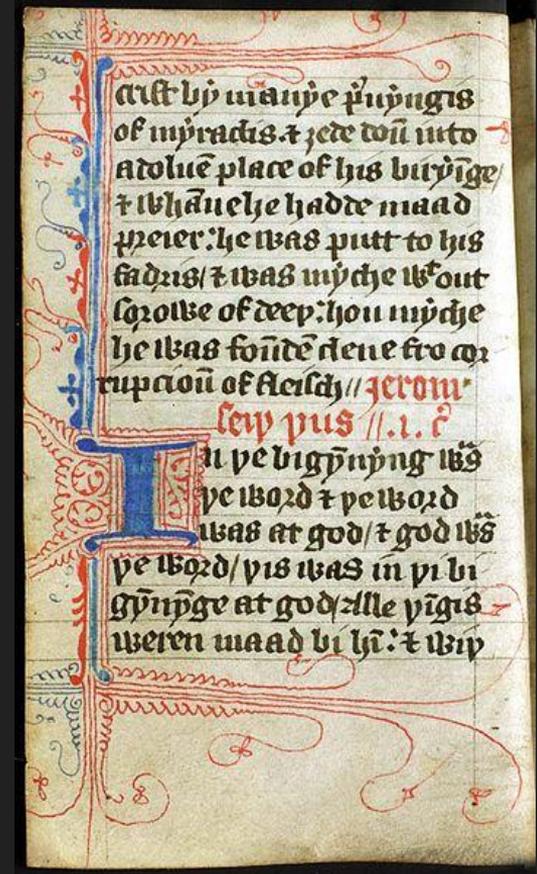


Major Themes of Wycliffe's Theology

- The Bible is the ultimate authority by which life is measured.
- Justification is possible only by the righteousness of Jesus Christ.
- The papacy is a man-made and corrupt institution.
- The true church consists not of an institutionalized hierarchy but rather the invisible church of the elect.

“Trust wholly in Christ, rely altogether on His sufferings, beware of seeking to be justified in any other way than by His righteousness. Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is sufficient for salvation, and that without faith it is impossible to please God; that the merit of Christ is able, by itself, to redeem all mankind from hell, and that this sufficiency is to be understood without any other cause concurring.”

“Holy Scripture is the faultless, most true, most perfect, and most holy law of God, which it is the duty of every man to learn, to know, to defend, and to observe, inasmuch as they are bound to serve the Lord in accordance with it, under the promise of an eternal reward.”



Wycliffe's Later Years

- Early in his career he was popular in England for his arguments against the pope's authority. However, his popularity waned with the more reform he sought.
- In 1377, Pope Gregory XI issued five papal bulls against him.
- He was incarcerated for a short period of time, then retired to his parish in Lutterworth in 1381.
- In 1382, ten of his teachings were deemed heretical.
- Wycliffe died of a stroke in 1384.

Wycliffe's Legacy

- Those who were associated with Wycliffe or followed his teachings were called Lollards.
- The group grew after Wycliffe's death, but also faced severe persecution.
- In 1408, the Archbishop of Canterbury said: "We therefore decree and ordain, that no man, hereafter, by his own authority translate any text of Scripture into English or any other tongue... and that no man can read any such book...in part or in whole."
- Officially condemned at the Council of Constance in 1415.

Wycliffe's Legacy

- In 1519, at Coventry, England, seven Lollards were burned at the stake for teaching their children the Lord's Prayer in English.
- When the converts of Wycliffe were burned at the stake, Wycliffe's Bible was put around their necks and burned with them.
- Wycliffe's writings were taken to the University of Prague where they were studied by many, including John Huss.

John Huss (1373-1415)

- Attended the University of Prague and supported himself by singing on the streets and in the churches.
- He was made dean of the philosophy faculty in 1401 and then became rector of the university in 1402. He was also appointed as preacher at Bethlehem Chapel the same year.
- Huss agreed with Wycliffe on the authority of Scripture, the abuse of power by the papacy, and the use of indulgences.

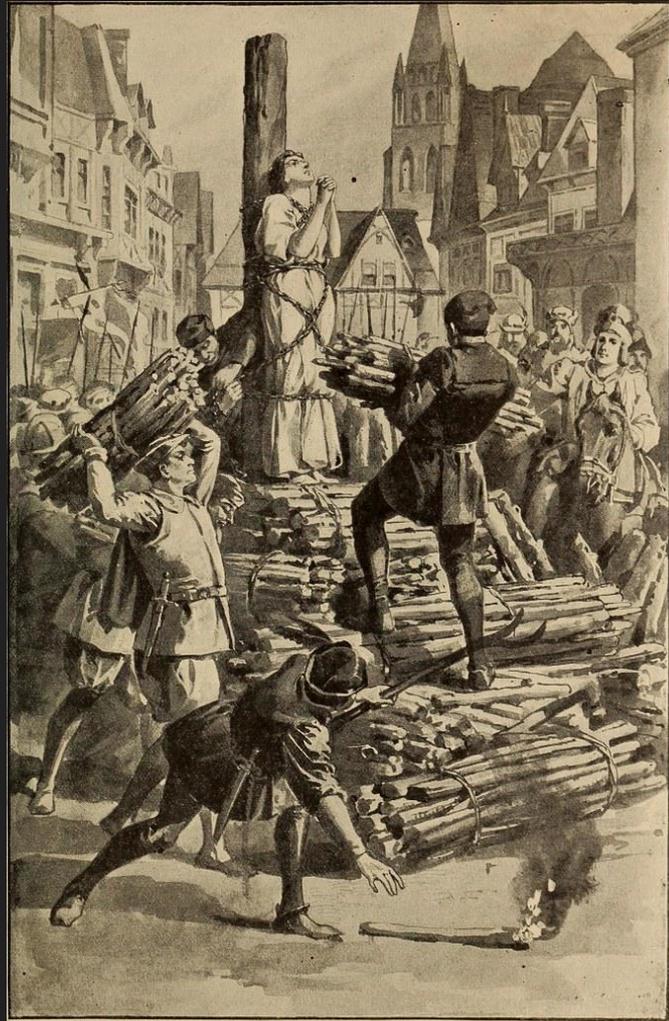


Huss Faces Opposition

- The official condemnation of Wycliffe led to more opposition to Huss.
- Huss's presence in Prague soon became problematic for he and his church, so he moved to the southern countryside and wrote a treatise called *The Church*. He insisted in be read from the pulpit at Bethlehem.
- Huss was called to the Council of Constance in 1414 to defend his views. He never got the chance to do so. Instead, he was mocked, bullied, and stripped of his vestments.

“Because our scribes desire the same, commanding that there be no preaching in chapels, even such as had been approved by the apostolic authority, therefore I, wishing to obey God rather than men, and to conform to the acts of Christ rather than to theirs, appeal this wrongful command first of all to God, to whom belongs the principal authority to grant the power to preach.”

"I stand here under the eye of God,
and I can never do what you ask me,
were I not to blaspheme Him and
prostitute my conscience ... My trust
is in the almighty God and in my Lord
Jesus Christ, who has redeemed me
and has called me to preach His
gospel to the last breath of my life."



Huss was
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stake.

“When he arrived at the place of execution, he knelt down and prayed with a joyful heart and a bright countenance. Then they stripped him down to his shirtsleeves, chained and roped him to a stake and piled wood around him to such a height that his head was barely visible — I omit other details. When the strong flames blazed up, he stopped singing and praying. But his spirit as we devoutly believe, reached with the flames to heaven, to the company of angels, just as Elijah did.”

Huss's Legacy

- Early in his monastic career, Martin Luther happened upon a volume of Huss's sermons.
- Luther later wrote. "I was overwhelmed with astonishment ... I could not understand for what cause they had burnt so great a man, who explained the Scriptures with so much gravity and skill."

Huss's Legacy

“Our reform movement was weak at first, but it grew from day to day. John Huss was the seed; he must first die, burned at the stake. Would not that seem to human reason great weakness? But see what, after a hundred years, has come of it!” - Martin Luther

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

- What other authorities are we tempted to put above or equal to the authority of Scripture?
- In what ways do we seek justification apart from faith in Christ?
- In these instances, it was “the Church” who was persecuting faithful believers. How should that be instructive for us today?