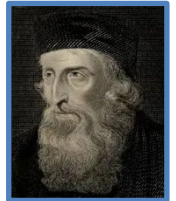


I. Introduction.

- A. We have now covered in our lessons the first twelve centuries of church history. We have traced the wonderful line of true Baptist churches through all these all years and we traced the growth of Catholicism.
- B. There was almost a continual revolution inside the Catholic Church seeking a Reformation. The Catholic Church by its continued departure from New Testament teachings, its many strange and cruel laws, its low state of morals, and its continued bloody persecution had become obnoxious and repulsive to many of its own adherents. Several of their best Catholic leaders, one by one began to seek reform.
- C. The 13th through the 17th centuries are among the most eventful in the world's history. We want to note some of these reformers and where they labored. [Significant advancements occurred in technology, including the development of mechanical clocks, gunpowder, the printing press, improved shipbuilding techniques, and advancements in medicine, alongside major cultural shifts like the Renaissance, which saw a resurgence of classical learning and artistic expression, and the beginnings of the Scientific Revolution with revolutionary ideas in astronomy and physics.]

II. John Wycliff, 1320 - 1384



- A. John Wycliff lived in England and was one of the first Reformers to gain worldwide attention. Few details of the early life of Wycliff are known.
 - 1. He attended Oxford and latter became a teacher of great renown, and a theology professor at the University of Oxford.
 - 2. He was at first honored and accepted by the Catholic Church.
- B. By 1376, the conditions within the Catholic Church aroused his opposition and Wycliff began to speak out in criticism, calling for reform.
 - 1. He denounced the wealth and pomp of the Church and called for a return to New Testament simplicity.
 - 2. The Scriptures, he taught, are the only law of the Church.
 - 3. He pointed out the errors of doctrine that were prevalant in the Catholic Church.
- C. Convinced that the Bible is the law of God, Wycliff determined to give it to the people in the English tongue. Between 1382-1384, the Scriptures were translated from Latin into English and given to the people.
- D. Wycliff soon was sending out what were called his "poor priests." These men went forth two-by-two in poverty, barefoot, clad in long robes, preaching the teachings of Wycliff.
- E. Wycliff developed a large following around the world. He was hated and hounded by the Roman Catholic Church heirarchy.
 - 1. The Pope issued several orders for Wycliff's execution but Wycliff's popularity kept the orders from being carried out.

2. Wycliff finally died of paralysis. Years later, the Catholic hate was so great, his bones were dug up and burned and his ashes scattered upon the waters.

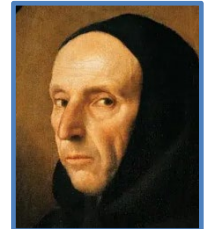
F. Wycliff was called, the “**Morning Star of the Reformation.**”

III. John Huss (Hus), 1373-1415



- A. John Huss was born in 1373 in Bohemia (the westernmost and largest historical region of the Czech Republic.) Jan Hus was a Czech priest, theologian, and philosopher who challenged the Catholic Church's practices and policies. His work was a bridge between the medieval and Reformation periods.
1. He attended the University of Prague where he obtained a Bachelor of Theology degree.
 2. In 1401, he was ordained to the priesthood of the Roman Catholic Church.
 3. John Huss became intimately acquainted with the writings of John Wycliff and was influenced by these writings.
- B. In 1402, Huss became a preacher at the Bethlehem Chape in Prague and soon gained immense popularity through his fiery sermons. He began calling for the same reforms that John Wycliff had called for before him.
- C. Huss' preaching roused great opposition and resulted in **his being burned at the stake.**

IV. Girolamo Savonarola, 1452-1498



- A. Savonarola was born in Florence, Italy in 1452. [Girolamo Savonarola, also referred to as Jerome Savonarola, was an ascetic (characterized by or suggesting the practice of severe self-discipline and abstention from all forms of indulgence, typically for religious reasons) Dominican friar from Ferrara and a preacher active in Renaissance Florence. He became known for his prophecies of civic glory, his advocacy of the destruction of secular art and culture, and his calls for Christian renewal.]
- B. Savonarola was studying medicine but an unsuccessful romance turned him to religion.
1. In 1474, he became a Dominican priest.
 2. Eight years after becoming a priest, Savonarola began preaching in Florence.
 3. Savonarola rose to such popularity that he came the **de facto** ruler of Florence.
- B. His call for reforms brought opposition from the Pope and Savonarola **was burned at the stake.**
- C. Of all the eloquent men of this period, Savonarola possibly stood head and shoulders above all the rest.