



WEDNESDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY

WALKING WITH THE GIANTS

JOHN WYCLIFFE

THE MORNING STAR OF
THE REFORMATION

Reading: Hebrews 11: 32 - 38a

Introduction

- John Wycliffe was about 100 years before John Huss and about 200 years before Martin Luther.
- Merle D'Aubigne called him '*the Martin Luther of England.*'
- In Wycliffe's time the medieval church owned about a 1/4 of all the land and 1/2 of all the money in England.

1 Early Days For Wycliffe

- Born in village of Wycliffe in N. Yorkshire about 1329.
- Went to study at Oxford and regarded as '*the flower of Oxford.*'
- In 1348 plague decimated Europe and England.
- Wiped out approximately half the population.
- Ordained a priest in 1351 and became a teacher at Oxford.
- Reported to be an eloquent preacher and excellent teacher.

2 Controversy And Promotion And Trials

- He supported the government seizing land of corrupt priests and friars.
- Stated that the church was all God's people in every age chosen in Christ.
- Further said the king's authority to rule was from God and he therefore had dominion over clergy.
- King Edward III made him one of his chaplains.
- The church condemned his stance and summoned him to be tried in St. Paul's.
- The trial never happened as a sword fight erupted and Wycliffe was escorted away.

3 Transubstantiation

- Rome: when the words of consecration are said the bread and wine become the actual body and blood of Christ.
- Wycliffe called this a '*blasphemous deceit*'
- He lost friends and as a result had to leave Oxford.

4 The Mendicant Friars

- Due to a shortage of ordained priests as a result of the plague, these friars travelled the countryside preaching fables and myths.
- They were also paid for hearing confessions and granting absolution.
- Wycliffe preached against them and they became enemies.
- Friars believed if you were buried in the religious garb of the friars you would get out of purgatory quicker.

5 Wycliffe And The Bible

- The Council of Valencia in 1229 had put Bible on the index of forbidden books.
- Wycliffe called for the Bible to be re-established as the ultimate authority in the church.
- He set about translating the Bible into English from the Latin Vulgate.
- Once copyists had hand written copies souls were converted and hearts revived.

6 The Lollards

- Wycliffe trained young men to preach and they went round towns and villages preaching.
- They were regarded by the RCC as '*unlicensed preachers*' and were persecuted.
- Wycliffe died in 1384 with the '*Lollards*' carrying on what he had started.
- The '*Lollards Pit*' in Norwich is where Lollards were burned at the stake as heretics in the eyes of the church.

7 Wycliffe's Last days And Beyond

- In the last 2 years of his life he suffered from the effects of a stroke.
- Died in 1384 and buried in the grounds of the church at Lutterworth.
- 44 years later in 1428 pope Martin V ordered his remains to be exhumed and burned at the stake.
- Referred too as '*the Morning Star of the Reformation*'
- The morning star shines brightest in the sky announcing the coming of a new day.

Teaching Biblically · Thinking Biblically · Living Biblically