

Great Controversy Series
True Reformation and John Wycliffe
Chapter 5 – John Wycliffe
Bible Sermon Study Notes: Pastor Cary Rodgers, Jr

Review Satan plans of stealth to attack to deceive, possess, and keep people in bondage..
Distract >Sleep>Doubt>Deception> Possession

Distract to cause others to be in darkness.... creates an environment of sleep.... when do people normally on a physical level go to sleep? At night!

It is in darkness when apostasy takes place which leads to full blown deception and possession by demonic spirits. That is why Babylon is a habitation of devils and a cage of hateful birds. The true spirit of God and Jesus is NOT there.

If you are in darkness and apostasy what MUST take place? A TRUE revival and reformation!

Before reformation there MUST be a true revival first. NO true revival, NO reformation.

Revive = restore to life or consciousness. Also to recover or repair.

If someone was unconscious or dead and brought back to life where he or she can breathe with vitality is a true revival.

In other words, to be revived spiritually is to be resurrected from spiritual death and ignorance to life with spiritual awareness and discernment. A true revival is a spiritual awakening to God's truth!

What kind of spirit or attitude you must have in order to be revived?

Isa 57:15 For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a **contrite and humble spirit**, to **revive the spirit of the humble**, and to revive the **heart of the contrite ones**.

Remember the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth that convicts of our condition and leads us to Jesus Christ who can revive us. Jesus has the power to breathe in us spiritual the breath of life so you can live again through Jesus. You go from death to life. In order for this to happen you MUST humble yourself through the conviction of the Holy Spirit. You must recognize that you are dead, in darkness, or living in apostasy. When God reveals that you are in apostasy, you have to make a choice, humility or pride?

Humility leads to revival. Pride leads to reject of TRUTH..

What sparks a revival? You can't have a revival without it.

Psa 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Pro 6:23 For the commandment is a lamp; and the law is light; and reproofs of instruction are the way of life:

2Pe 1:19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

What sparks a revival? The Word of God, His commandments that reveals sin, the sure word of prophecy which are the testimonies of Jesus Christ, and the acceptance of the WORD, Jesus that revives us again.

Does this happen by chance or luck? No, it is a choice. God does not make you study. He convicts and encourages, but He will not FORCE you to study! He is not going to blow up your TV in the midst of you watching the game and then thunder down a voice from heaven, "You study the Bible or else!" When you have conviction of the light of truth you MUST search and study to live the truth. There is NO way around it.

2 Ti 2:15 Study [diligence-earnestness] to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

After true revival takes place true reformation is now possible, but it is also a choice and must be daily and consistent. Again revival first, then reformation.

What is true Biblical reformation? What is the "fruit" of reformation? What does it look like?

Remember: Originally created in the image of God to reflect the character of God, but sin corrupted that image. The plan of salvation through Jesus Christ came to restore the image in us....

2 Corinthians 5:17

17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

True Reformation -

Creature -Ktisis From [G2936](#); original *formation* (properly the act; by implication the thing, literally or figuratively): - building, creation, creature, ordinance.

Reform = To change from bad to good; to remove that which is bad or corrupt. To abandon that which is evil or corrupt, and return to a good state

True Reformation = ALL THINGS NEW – NEW LIFESTYLE - REBIRTH

All things are become new! - how you spend your time, your dress, your diet, your friends, habits, etc are ALL new.... no longer conformed to the world.... all these reflect the character – the glory of GOD!

Reformation is a re-creation back into the image of God. It is a reorganization of ALL things in your life that lines up with God's Word.

Psa 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Ezekiel 18:30-32

- 30 Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn *yourselves* from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin.
- 31 Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel?
- 32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn *yourselves*, and live ye.

Don't expect true reformation to take place without turning from sin. If this does not happen you turn off the lights of walk back in darkness!

Joh 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

TRUE REFORMATION: OLD THINGS ARE PAST AWAY

Romans 6:4-6

- 4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
- 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:
- 6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Ephesians 4:22-24

- 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;
- 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;
- 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

TRUE REFORMATION = RENEWED THINKING

Romans 12:1-2

- 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.
- 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

What is the evidence of true revival and reformation?

Mat 12:33 Either make the tree good, and his fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt, and his fruit corrupt: for the tree is known by his fruit.

Matthew 3:7-8

- 7 But when he (John the Baptist) saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
- 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

Before a reformer can be a reformer a transformation and change must take place in their own personal lives. A reformer cannot be a hypocrite....

TRUE REFORMATION = FEAR GOD & GIVE GLORY TO HIM (1st Angel's message Revelation 14:7)

What is the fear of God? How do you FEAR GOD?

Proverbs 8:13

13 The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.

Psalms 101:2-3

- 2 I will behave myself wisely in a perfect way. O when wilt thou come unto me? I will walk within my house with a perfect heart.
- 3 I will set no wicked thing before mine eyes: I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.

Psalms 97:10

10 Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of

the wicked.

Romans 12:9

9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

In Summary: Revival and Reformation

“A revival and a reformation must take place under the ministration of the Holy Spirit. Revival and reformation are two different things. Revival signifies a renewal of spiritual life, a quickening of the powers of mind and heart, a resurrection from the spiritual death. Reformation signifies a reorganization, a change in ideas and theories, habits and practices. Reformation will not bring forth the good fruit of righteousness unless it is connected with the revival of the Spirit. Revival and reformation are to do their appointed work, and in doing this work they must blend.”-- Review and Herald, Feb. 25, 1902.

Example of true revival and reformation that built the reformation movement in darkness and in the midst of apostasy. All reformers who came out of spiritual darkness and apostasy first was revived spiritually and had their own personal reformation.

Remember during the 1260 years of apostasy and darkness God still preserved His truth through faithful men and women such as the Waldenses.

How did God ignite and establish a revival and reformation movement in the midst of millions in deep apostasy? Did you know that some of the reformers who were in the midst of the deep apostasy of the Papal Rome church were ministers and Catholic priest trained by papal Rome? Many were in darkness, but the common trend that each true reformation had was the light shining from the Word of God.

During the 1260 years of Papal Rome rule, they tried to keep its subjects and ministers in the dark by keeping the Bible truth hidden. Most of the Bibles that were available at the time were written in ancient Latin (Latin Vulgate). Latin Vulgate was an old ancient translation from Hebrew and Greek to Latin. Most of the people under the subjection of Papal Rome did not speak Latin.

[Show Bible in Latin Text]

“Except among the Waldenses, the word of God had for ages been locked up in languages known only to the learned; but the time had come for the Scriptures to be translated and given to the people of different lands in their native tongue. The world had passed its midnight. The hours of darkness were wearing away, and in many lands appeared tokens of the coming dawn.

In the fourteenth century arose in England the "morning star of the Reformation." John Wycliffe was the herald of reform, not for England alone, but for all Christendom.” GC 79

During the dark ages from 538 to 1798 of the papacy God raised up John Wycliffe, a sincere and faithful minister who was shrouded in spiritual darkness, but woke up out of spiritual sleep and laid the foundation of the protestant reformation. He was one of the first minister who spoke up and wrote about the fraud and apostasy of Papal Rome. What woke him up and reformed him? The Word of God, the Bible. John Wycliffe was the first reformer to translate the Latin Bible into the common English language of the common people in England.

Let’s learn more about this powerful man of God.

The Beginning (14th Century)

- Born in between 1320’s or 30’s in Yorkshire, England

- Thirst and love for knowledge. With him the fear of the Lord was the beginning of wisdom
- Studied various subjects in the colleges of England such as scholastic philosophy, church law, civil law, and the language of Latin.
- Because he knew Latin, he was able to study the Bible. The Bible was his main source of study.

“Like after Reformers, Wycliffe did not, at the opening of his work, foresee whither it would lead him. He did not set himself deliberately in opposition to Rome. But devotion to truth could not but bring him in conflict with falsehood. The more clearly he discerned the errors of the papacy, the more earnestly he presented the teaching of the Bible. He saw that Rome had forsaken the word of God for human tradition; he fearlessly accused the priesthood of having banished the Scriptures, and demanded that the Bible be restored to the people and that its authority be again established in the church. He was an able and earnest teacher and an eloquent preacher, and his daily life was a demonstration of the truths he preached.” GC - 81

Chaplain

- The King of England appointed Wycliffe to be the chaplain of the king.
- Took a bold stand against the payment of tribute claimed by the pope from the English monarch and showed that the papal assumed of authority over secular rulers or king was contrary to both reason and revelation.
- Papal Rome was extremely angry but at the time England stood on the side of Wycliffe and did not pay the tribute money to the papacy.

Exposed and Opposed the Catholic Monks

- Exposed the pretended poverty of the Catholic Monks who were taking money from the poor and enriching themselves.
- Monks were known to recruit students at England universities and entrap them in life of popery.
- The monks kept the people in bondage with superstitious beliefs and rituals.
- Wycliffe wrote and published tracts against the monks called people to the study of the scriptures.

Royal Ambassador

- Wycliffe was made the Royal Ambassador of the king to defend rights of sovereignty the English crown against the control Papal Rome.
- As royal ambassador he was able to see more of the “inner workings” of the papacy and vowed to fight even harder to exposed their apostasy and take people England out of the papal darkness.
- Wrote and published more tracts against Papal Rome

“In one of his (Wycliffe) tracts he said, speaking of the pope and his collectors: ‘They draw out of our land poor men's livelihood, and many thousand marks, by the year, of the king's money, for sacraments and spiritual things, that is cursed heresy of simony (buying or selling of ecclesiastical privileges), and maketh all Christendom assent and maintain this heresy. And certes (for certain) though our realm had a huge hill of gold,

and never other man took thereof but only this proud worldly priest's collector, by process of time this hill must be spende; for he taketh ever money out of our land, and sendeth nought again but God's curse for his simony.' --John Lewis, History of the Life and Sufferings of J. Wycliffe, page 37." GC - 85

Parrish minister (rector) of Lutterworth, England

After his appointment as royal ambassador, the king appointed Wycliffe as the minister at the church of St Mary in Lutterworth, England 1374 and 1384.

Papal Rome's Reaction!

“Three bulls were dispatched to England,--to the university, to the king, and to the prelates,--all commanding immediate and decisive measures to silence the teacher of heresy. Before the arrival of the bulls, however, the bishops, in their zeal, had summoned Wycliffe before them for trial. But two of the most powerful princes in the kingdom accompanied him to the tribunal; and the people, surrounding the building and rushing in, so intimidated the judges that the proceedings were for the time suspended, and he was allowed to go his way in peace.” GC – 85

Not long another bull that demanded the arrest and life of Wycliffe was sent to England.

It appeared that a martyr's death was going to happen to Wycliffe, but the pope that plotted his death, pope Gregory XI died!

The Rival Popes

- As a result of pope Gregory's XI death two opposing popes were elected from two opposing cardinal groups of the Papal Roman Empire. This is known as the Papal Schism that lasted for about 40 years from 1378 to 1417. Before it was all over a third rival pope joined the fight for supremacy.
- The rival pope fought from supreme calling each other the “antichrist.”
- Wycliffe wrote a powerful tract entitled, On the Schism of the Popes.
- During this papal schism Wycliffe as the freedom to minister and spread the truth of God's word through writing more tracts and training other ministers.

“Not content with spreading the light in their humble homes in his own parish of Lutterworth, he determined that it should be carried to every part of England. To accomplish this he organized a body of preachers, simple, devout men, who loved the truth and desired nothing so much as to extend it. These men went everywhere, teaching in the market places, in the streets of the great cities, and in the country lanes. They sought out the aged, the sick, and the poor, and opened to them the glad tidings of the grace of God.” GC - 87

Oxford University professor

Preached the Bible truth throughout the university and to students.

Became known as the “gospel doctor” on campus.

Rose from death bed to complete the translation of Latin Bible into English

Wycliffe greatest work that was the main foundation of the protestant reformation was the translation of the Latin Bible to English.

In his late 50's before the translation was complete Wycliffe became very sick, it appeared that he was about to die! The priests of papal Rome in England was hoping that Wycliffe would retract and denounce all his words against Papal Rome. They came and visited to be a witness of Wycliffe death and retraction.

“Now they thought he would bitterly repent the evil he had done the church, and they hurried to his chamber to listen to his confession. Representatives from the four religious orders, with four civil officers, gathered about the supposed dying man. "You have death on your lips," they said; "be touched by your faults, and retract in our presence all that you have said to our injury." The Reformer listened in silence; then he bade his attendant raise him in his bed, and, gazing steadily upon them as they stood waiting for his recantation, he said, in the firm, strong voice which had so often caused them to tremble: "I shall not die, but live; and again declare the evil deeds of the friars."--D'Aubigne, b. 17, ch. 7. Astonished and abashed, the monks hurried from the room.” GC – 87

Most powerful weapon of against error, the Word of God was given in a their naive tongue in England.

Duplicates had to be copied by hand. A very precious book to many.

Papal Rome reaction to the translation Wycliffe's Bible translation

The bishops of England, won young king Richard II to their side to put Wycliffe in prison.

Wycliffe before the bishop and royal council of Parliament and defended his position with boldness. Parliament of England was stirred and decided to let Wycliffe go.

Again Wycliffe was called before the council a third time, this time the flames were sure if he did not recant

To the council: "With whom, think you," he finally said, "are ye contending? with an old man on the brink of the grave? No! with Truth--Truth which is stronger than you, and will overcome you."--Wylie, b. 2, ch. 13. So saying, he withdrew from the assembly, and not one of his adversaries attempted to prevent him.” GC – 90

Summons to Rome

Wycliffe was summoned by the papacy to go to Rome before the papal tribunal. He would have went but sickness prevented him. Instead her wrote his position in letter that was delivered to the papal tribunal in Rome.

“Wycliffe fully expected that his life would be the price of his fidelity. The king, the pope, and the bishops were united to accomplish his ruin, and it seemed certain that a few months at most would bring him to the stake. But his courage was unshaken. "Why do you talk of seeking the crown of martyrdom afar?" he said. "Preach the gospel of Christ to haughty prelates, and martyrdom will not fail you. What! I should live and be silent? . . . Never! Let the blow fall, I await its coming."--D'Aubigne, b. 17, ch. 8.

Wycliffe Bones Burned

Papal Rome was not able to kill Wycliffe. They were extremely disappointed. Wycliffe died from the result of palsy on December 31, 1384

Forty years later after Wycliffe death Papal Rome exhumed his publicly burned his bones out of hate and poured his ashes in the neighboring brook.

"This brook," says an old writer, "hath conveyed his ashes into Avon, Avon into Severn, Severn into the narrow seas, they into the main ocean. And thus the ashes of Wycliffe are the emblem of his doctrine, which now is dispersed all the world over."-- T. Fuller, Church History of Britain, b. 4, sec. 2, par. 54. Little did his enemies realize the significance of their malicious act. GC - 95

Wycliffites and Lollards

The Wycliffites and also known as the Lollards were evangelist and ministers that continued the work of Wycliffe throughout England and beyond. Many had to escape to caves and dungeons. Some were persecuted in killed, but their work built a firm foundation of other future reformers.

Great Reformer

“Wycliffe accepted the Holy Scriptures with implicit faith as the inspired revelation of God's will, a sufficient rule of faith and practice. He had been educated to regard the Church of Rome as the divine, infallible authority, and to accept with unquestioning reverence the established teachings and customs of a thousand years; but he turned away from all these to listen to God's holy word. This was the authority which he urged the people to acknowledge. Instead of the church speaking through the pope, he declared the only true authority to be the voice of God speaking through His word. And he taught not only that the Bible is a perfect revelation of God's will, but that the Holy Spirit is its only interpreter, and that every man is, by the study of its teachings, to learn his duty for himself. Thus he turned the minds of men from the pope and the Church of Rome to the word of God. GC- 93

John Huss

“It was through the writings of Wycliffe that John Huss, of Bohemia, was led to renounce many of the errors of Romanism and to enter upon the work of reform. Thus in these two countries, so widely separated, the seed of truth was sown. From Bohemia the work extended to other lands. The minds of men were directed to the long-forgotten word of God. A divine hand was preparing the way for the Great Reformation.” GC – 96

True Modern Revival and Reformation

Appeal