



SAVED TO SERVE

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THE GREAT CONTROVERSY PT.5: JOHN WYCLIFFE
RIVALRY AND SCANDALS ROCK CATHOLIC CHURCH & SDA CHURCH

1. Let us study the fifth chapter in *The Great Controversy*, entitled "John Wycliffe."

2. Note: In our previous lesson, we studied the chapter entitled "The Waldenses." Consider the connection between the two chapters.

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. {GC 79.2}

3a. What title was given to John Wycliffe? _____

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. The great protest against Rome which it was permitted him to utter was never to be silenced. That protest opened the struggle which was to result in the emancipation of individuals, of churches, and of nations. {GC 80.1}

3b. Note: Consider that this time period was "The Era of Spiritual Darkness" and "the noon of the Papacy was midnight for the world." See *The Great Controversy*, page 60.2.

3c. Note: The following events show that we are entering "the noon of the papacy." Therefore, the Lord will raise up men like John Wycliffe to do a similar work as he did. The experience of John Wycliffe must be ours. His manner of conducting ministry we must imitate to a great extent in these last days.

Pope Francis' popularity among Americans goes from high to higher" <http://www.satrib.com/home/4843425-155/pope-francis-popularity-among-americans-goes>

"Pope Francis More Popular Than Donald Trump, President Barack Obama In US, Survey Shows" <http://www.ibtimes.com/pope-francis-more-popular-donald-trump-president-barack-obama-us-survey-shows-2478489>

"Pope Francis: Still Popular" "The Pew Research Center has released new data showing that Pope Francis is still very popular among the American people, with 70% viewing him favorably. That matches his previous peak of 70% in February 2015. Francis has been on an upward climb since he began his papacy in March of 2013, when his favorability rating stood at 57%. Francis remains even more popular among U.S. Catholics, with 87 percent viewing him favorably in the most recent survey. <https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/blog/pope-francis-still-popular>

Divine intervention! EU leaders will turn to the POPE over plans to revive struggling bloc...**Brussels chiefs are hoping the Pontiff can provide them with the "leadership" they are lacking to help solve the debilitating crises tearing the bloc apart. The 28 heads of government will meet with Pope Francis on March 24**, the day before they all gather in the Italian capital to celebrate the 60th birthday of the EU **and launch its "rebirth"**. One pro-EU think-tank official said that, with Barack Obama gone from the White House, **the head of the Catholic Church was the "only moral authority" European politicians had left to follow. The news that the EU's most powerful men and women are seeking divine intervention from the Pope may raise eyebrows amongst critics who feel they have no answers to the bloc's growing problems...**He added: **"I do think he [Pope Francis] is the ultimate world leader** that within the circumstances **has the skills and the vision to say things that transcend the obvious and banalities we all say in politics."** <http://www.express.co.uk/news/politics/773508/European-Union-EU-leaders-Pope-Francis-Rome-Summit>

4a. Where was John Wycliffe from? _____ {GC 80.1}

4b. Note: The morning star of the Reformation, John Wycliffe, arose in England. Yet the Church of England is one of the primary entities that is presently leading the march for Protestants to unite with the Papacy. See the following.

Church of England archbishops call on Christians to repent for Reformation split...Justin Welby and John Sentamu recall 'damage done five centuries ago' that saw Christian people pitted against each other. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/17/church-of-england-archbishops-call-on-christians-repent-reformation-split?CMP=share_btn_link

"Let's get rid of prejudices and walk together" ...**In the past, we looked at each other "with suspicion and hostility", today "we recognize ourselves as we truly are: brothers and sisters in Christ."** And as such - as "friends and pilgrims" - "we wish to walk together..." **the first Pope to ever enter its fray - shows the path to increase ecumenical relations between Catholics and Anglicans....The path towards full communion "may appear slow and uncertain" at times, but today's meeting wants to give new impetus**, Bergoglio said... "The relations between Catholics and Anglicans are good!" Exclaimed impetuously Francis, "We see ourselves as brothers and sisters. **It is true that in history there have been bad things, however no one can "rip a piece of history and take it as if it were an icon. It is not right; it must be read in the hermeneutics of history. We have moved on....At the end of the function, there was the official signing of an agreement formalizing a partnership** between the Church of All Saints and the Catholic parish of All Saints in Rome. **"A good sign," says the Pope, of the will to move towards full communion.** <http://www.lastampa.it/2017/02/27/vaticaninsider/eng/the-vatican/lets-get-rid-of-prejudices-and-walk-together-bUCqk3SDHdQjnPTAAdLRZK/pagina.html>

When Pope Francis and the Archbishop of Canterbury Justin Welby join in prayer tomorrow morning at vespers, or evening prayers, in San Gregorio al Celio church in Rome, **this will mark another step towards unity between Anglicans and Catholics. They are already "85 per cent" there**, according to the Archbishop who heads the Anglican Centre in Rome. <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/archbishop.justin.welby.and.pope.francis.want.christian.unity.will.they.get.it/97047.htm>

5a. What was the mission of John Wycliffe? _____ See also Luke 4:18

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. The great protest against Rome which it was permitted him to utter was never to be silenced. That protest opened the struggle which was to result in the emancipation of individuals, of churches, and of nations. {GC 80.1}

5b. How did Wycliffe liberate England? _____

At last the work was completed--the first English translation of the Bible ever made. The word of God was opened to England. The Reformer feared not now the prison or the stake. He had placed in the hands of the English people a light which should never be extinguished. In giving the Bible to his countrymen, he had done more to break the fetters of ignorance and vice, more to liberate and elevate his country, than was ever achieved by the most brilliant victories on fields of battle. {GC 88.2}

5c. Note: Along with the KJV Bible, the book *The Great Controversy*, must be distributed in order to liberate individuals, churches, and nations from the deceptions and the grasps of the Papacy.

5d. What did the authorities do in the attempt to stop the circulation of God's word? _____

The appearance of the Scriptures brought dismay to the authorities of the church. They had now to meet an agency more powerful than Wycliffe--an agency against which their weapons would avail little. There was at this time no law in England prohibiting the Bible, for it had never before been published in the language of the people. Such laws were afterward enacted and rigorously enforced. Meanwhile, notwithstanding the efforts of the priests, there was for a season opportunity for the circulation of the word of God. {GC 89.2}

5e. Note: Laws are being enacted in various countries not only banning the preaching of the Bible but also the distributing of the book *The Great Controversy*.

"Russia's Proposed Law: No Evangelizing Outside of Church" <http://www.christianitytoday.com/gleanings/2016/june/no-evangelizing-outside-of-church-russia-proposes.html>

"Will 'The Great Controversy' Project Harm Adventism?" Back in the 1980s, I was the Church Ministries Director of the Quebec Conference. I was alone at the office when the phone rang. I was instantly startled by the tone of the voice at the other end. An angry man went on the attack: "[Is this the headquarters of the Seventh-day Adventist Church?](#)" I asked who he was. "[I am the police commissioner of Montreal.](#)" Somewhat frazzled, I asked him the reason of his call and obvious unhappiness. "[We have received numerous complaints about a book entitled The Great Controversy that is being placed in letter boxes in a "wealthy section" of the city.](#) After some research we have identified your Church as the publisher and distributor. [A quick perusal has clearly shown that the book is very anti the Catholic Church and thus falls in the category of 'Hate Literature' because its content can easily create hatred between communities.](#)" Then he quoted from an article of law that prohibited such an action and mentioned the heavy fine that went along for distributing material attacking another church. <http://spectrummagazine.org/article/eddy-johnson/2011/08/26/will-great-controversy-project-harm-adventism>

5f. Note: The LGBT movement is also designed to silence the preaching of present truth.

6a. What was another evil against which Wycliffe waged long and resolute battle? _____

Another evil against which the Reformer waged long and resolute battle was the institution of the orders of mendicant friars. These friars swarmed in England, casting a blight upon the greatness and prosperity of the nation. Industry, education, morals, all felt the withering influence.... {GC 82.2}

6b. Note: This is one reason why it is dangerous for Bible-believing Christians to join in ecumenical movement with the Papacy and a Jesuit-pope. Secondly, it is dangerous for Seventh-day Adventists to quote the words of friars in their Sabbath-school lesson guide as an authority.

6c. Are the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Denomination worldwide presently eating from Jezebel's table? **Answer:** Yes. Let us confirm this fact. The "Adult Sabbath School Bible Study Guide" for the months of April through June 2014, is entitled Christ and His Law. On page number eleven (11), the principal contributor, Keith Burton, quoted from Leslie J. Hoppe.

6d. Who is Leslie J. Hoppe? **Answer:** He is a Roman Catholic and a member of the Order of Friars. The following is the confirmation.

"He is member of the Assumption Province, **Order of Friars Minor** and a **Roman Catholic priest.**" <http://www.ctu.edu/academics/leslie-j-hoppe-ofm>

7a. What did John Wycliffe declare, in order to bring about the needed reform? _____

Men of learning and piety had labored in vain to bring about a reform in these monastic orders; but Wycliffe, **with clearer insight, struck at the root of the evil, declaring that the system itself was false and that it should be abolished.** {GC 84.1}

7b. Note: John the Baptist said similar words to the leaders of the Jewish church, as he brought forth the needed reformation during the first advent of Jesus. See Matthew 3:9,10 and Matthew 15:9-14, and read the following quotation which can be applied to the remnant church today.

"And now also," said the prophet, "the ax is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire." Not by its name, but by its fruit, is the value of a tree determined. If the fruit is worthless, the name cannot save the tree from destruction. John declared to the Jews that their standing before God was to be decided by their character and life. Profession was worthless. If their life and character were not in harmony with God's law, they were not His people. {DA 107.1} The disciples noted the rage of the spies as their false teaching was exposed. They saw the angry looks, and heard the half-muttered words of dissatisfaction and revenge. Forgetting how often Christ had given evidence that He read the heart as an open book, **they told Him of the effect of His words. Hoping that He might conciliate the enraged officials, they said to Jesus, "Knowest Thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?" He answered, "Every plant, which My heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up." {DA 398.1}**

7c. Note: The system of education, the seminaries, the medical institutions, ADRA, the Pathfinders, the books in the libraries among this remnant movement need to be abolished. The Lord's ideal must be established in these areas.

8a. What did John Wycliffe do, in order to open the minds of the people and to overthrow the deception? _____

Wycliffe began to write and publish tracts against the friars, not, however, seeking so much to enter into dispute with them as to call the minds of the people to the teachings of the Bible and its Author. He declared that the power of pardon or of excommunication is possessed by the pope in no greater degree than by common priests, and that no man can be truly excommunicated unless he has first brought upon himself the condemnation of God. **In no more effectual way could he have undertaken the overthrow of that mammoth fabric of spiritual and temporal dominion** which the pope had erected and in which the souls and bodies of millions were held captive. {GC 84.2}

8b. Note: The people feared that if they did not accept the erroneous teachings of their leaders and if they did not attend the church services, then they would be excommunicated and be lost forever. Read the following, John 15:1 and

"I am the true Vine." The Jews had always regarded the vine as the most noble of plants, and a type of all that was powerful, excellent, and fruitful. Israel had been represented as a vine which God had planted in the Promised Land. The Jews based their hope of salvation on the fact of their connection with Israel. But Jesus says, I am the real Vine. Think not that through a connection with Israel you may become partakers of the life of God, and inheritors of His promise. Through Me alone is spiritual life received. {DA 675.1}

9a. How did God's providence work to give opportunity for the growth of the Reformation? _____

God's providence still further overruled events to give opportunity for the growth of the Reformation. The death of Gregory was followed by **the election of two rival popes.** Two conflicting powers, each professedly infallible, now claimed obedience. **Each called upon the faithful to assist him in making war upon the other, enforcing his demands by terrible anathemas against his adversaries,** and promises of rewards in heaven to his supporters. **This occurrence greatly weakened the power of the papacy. The rival factions had all they could do to attack each other, and Wycliffe for a time had rest.** Anathemas and recriminations were flying from pope to pope, and torrents of blood were poured out to support their conflicting claims. **Crimes and scandals flooded the church. Meanwhile the Reformer, in the quiet retirement of his parish of Lutterworth, was laboring diligently to point men from the contending popes to Jesus, the Prince of Peace.** {GC 86.2}

9b. Note the following applications:

Civil war in the Vatican as conservatives battle Francis for the soul of Catholicism <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/mar/04/vatican-civil-war-conservatives-battle-francis-lent>

Pope Francis: 'I do not see Cardinal Burke as an enemy' <https://cruxnow.com/vatican/2017/03/08/pope-francis-not-see-cardinal-burke-enemy/>

Archbishop Chaput: Pope Francis cannot contradict John Paul II on Communion <http://www.catholicerald.co.uk/news/2017/03/03/archbishop-chaput-pope-francis-cannot-contradict-john-paul-ii-on-communion/>

Pope says "at peace" confronting Vatican corruption, sex abuse <http://www.reuters.com/article/pope-corruption-idUSKBN1501RY>

Rwanda: Catholic bishops apologize for role in genocide <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2016/11/20/rwanda-catholic-bishops-apologize-for-role-in-genocide.html>

Mass grave found at former Catholic orphanage in Ireland <http://www.latimes.com/world/la-fg-mass-grave-ireland-20170303-story.html>

The Church And Argentina's Dirty War: Why The Vatican Needs To Open Its Files <http://www.christiantoday.com/article/the-church-and-argentinas-dirty-war-why-the-vatican-needs-to-open-its-files/98996.htm>

9c. Note: There is also to be found among this remnant movement of Seventh-day Adventists rivalry and scandals. Rivalry among the majority of the General Conference leaders and North American Division leaders for power and control, especially in the areas of Women's Ordination and the LGBT movement. There is scandal over child abuse, adultery, racial tensions.

10a. What was John Wycliffe's vision? How did he accomplish it? _____

Wycliffe, like his Master, preached the gospel to the poor. 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 87.1}

The preachers whom he had sent out circulated the Bible, together with the Reformer's writings, and with such success that the new faith was accepted by nearly one half of the people of England. {GC 89.1}

10b. Note: A similar aggressive training and evangelism must be done today. The preachers must circulate the KJV Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. See also Matthew 11:2; John 1:35-39; John 4:1,2. John the Baptist and Jesus Christ had training schools and places of worship simultaneously with the Jewish Church.

10c. The Lord raised up John Wycliffe like whom, in order to lay a firm foundation for the Reformation? _____
Wycliffe came from the obscurity of the Dark Ages. **There were none who went before him from whose work he could shape his system of reform. Raised up like John the Baptist to accomplish a special mission, he was the herald of a new era.** Yet in the system of truth which he presented there was a unity and completeness which Reformers who followed him did not exceed, and which some did not reach, even a hundred years later. **So broad and deep was laid the foundation, so firm and true was the framework, that it needed not to be reconstructed by those who came after him.** {GC 93.1}
See also Malachi 4:4-6.

11. What was the greatest work of Wycliffe's life? What did he say on his dying bed? _____
As a professor of theology at Oxford, Wycliffe preached the word of God in the halls of the university. So faithfully did he present the truth to the students under his instruction, that he received the title of "the gospel doctor." **But the greatest work of his life was to be the translation of the Scriptures into the English language.** In a work, *On the Truth and Meaning of Scripture*, he expressed **his intention to translate the Bible, so that every man in England might read, in the language in which he was born, the wonderful works of God.** {GC 87.2}
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. **Wycliffe's words were fulfilled. He lived to place in the hands of his countrymen the most powerful of all weapons against Rome--to give them the Bible, the Heaven-appointed agent to liberate, enlighten, and evangelize the people.** {GC 87.3}

12. What did Wycliffe expect due to his aggressive work of evangelism? _____
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. {GC 92.3}

13a. Where did Wycliffe end his days on earth? _____
But God's providence still shielded His servant. The man who for a whole lifetime had stood boldly in defense of the truth, in daily peril of his life, was not to fall a victim of the hatred of its foes. Wycliffe had never sought to shield himself, but the Lord had been his protector; and now, when his enemies felt sure of their prey, God's hand removed him beyond their reach. **In his church at Lutterworth, as he was about to dispense the communion, he fell, stricken with palsy, and in a short time yielded up his life.** {GC 92.4}

13b. Note: In order to continue the work of Reformation, Wycliffe established a place of worship so that the people could be fed with the word of God.

14. What distinctive doctrines did John Wycliffe teach? _____
The appeal to men's reason aroused them from their passive submission to papal dogmas. **Wycliffe now taught the distinctive doctrines of Protestantism--salvation through faith in Christ, and the sole infallibility of the Scriptures.** The preachers whom he had sent out circulated the Bible, together with the Reformer's writings, and with such success that the new faith was accepted by nearly one half of the people of England. {GC 89.1}

15a. What prepared John Wycliffe to engage in the great struggle for civil and religious liberty? _____
Wycliffe received a liberal education, and with him the fear of the Lord was the beginning of wisdom. He was noted at college for his fervent piety as well as for his remarkable talents and sound scholarship. In his thirst for knowledge he sought to become acquainted with every branch of learning. **He was educated in the scholastic philosophy, in the canons of the church, and in the civil law, especially that of his own country.** In his after labors the value of this early training was apparent. A thorough acquaintance with the speculative philosophy of his time enabled him to expose its errors; **and by his study of national and ecclesiastical law he was prepared to engage in the great struggle for civil and religious liberty.** {GC 80.2}

15b. What is the fear of God? Proverbs 8:13; Psalm 34:11-14 _____

15c. Sin is the transgression of the law. See 1 John 3:4. Jesus says: "If you love me, keep my commandments."

15d. It would be well for us to spend a thoughtful hour each day in contemplation of the life of Christ. We should take it point by point, and let the imagination grasp each scene, especially the closing ones. As we thus dwell upon His great sacrifice for us, our confidence in Him will be more constant, our love will be quickened, and we shall be more deeply imbued with His spirit. If we would be saved at last, we must learn the lesson of penitence and humiliation at the foot of the cross. {DA 83.4}

15e. Not until we experience the principles of the first angel's message, then we are ready to proclaim the second and the third angels' messages. The third angel's message specifically deals with civil and religious liberties. See Revelation 14:6-12.