

John Hus

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[0 : 0 0] Well, last week, we began a kind of brief study in church history, and kind of the purpose of that was that we wanted to build off of the study that we had done on the doctrine of the Word.

So we had heard what those in church history said about the Word. We had heard them affirm what we too ought to believe about the Word, that it is inspired, that it is inerrant, authoritative, clear, sufficient, necessary, all of those very important truths. We heard what they said about it. Now we want to consider how did that impact the way that they live? How did that impact their lives as they lived out their faith? So last week, we looked at John Bunyan. This week, we are going backwards in time, about 250 years. So we're going to go to the 1400s, near the end of the Middle Ages. And we're going to study the life and the teachings of a man named John Huss. Now his last name is spelled sometimes with one S, sometimes with two S's, and that's really his anglicized name. Technically, it should be pronounced more like Jan Hus, but I'm just going to say John Huss. So that's how we'll pronounce it this morning. If you haven't heard of this man, he was a very key transitional figure between the end of the Middle Ages and the Reformation.

He was one who very much impacted and helped to spark the Reformation of the 1500s by his influence upon many Reformers that we would be familiar with. So much of what the leading figures in the Reformation came to oppose in the Catholic Church and sought to remedy. Huss was actually already doing 100 years before, but not in Germany, as Luther did, but in Bohemia. Bohemia is basically modern-day Czech Republic. In fact, there was an entire movement called the Bohemian Reformation that centered on reforming the Catholic Church, and it preceded the Reformation that was led by Luther, that we are probably more familiar with. And this whole movement in Bohemia, it itself actually predated Huss. So Huss did not begin the Bohemian Reformation, but he very much was a key figure in it, so much so that it would almost be termed at times the Hussite Reformation of the 1400s.

Now, this Reformation we want to consider together, and we want to consider Huss's influence upon that Reformation. It was a much more localized movement than the Reformation of Luther, and then that's probably one of the reasons why, for many of us, we may not be as familiar with the Bohemian Reformation, because it did not leave Bohemia in its impact upon the common person. It was very much centered there in what is now the Czech Republic. It stayed contained to Bohemia. But Huss and others in that Reformation had a great influence upon people like Martin Luther. In fact, when Luther was still a Catholic monk, he came across a volume of sermons that Huss had written, and this is what he would later say about that discovery.

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.

[3 : 32] So, spoiler alert, Huss was burnt at the stake. But before we get to his death, let's start way back with his birth. Huss was born near the end of the Middle Ages, around 1370, as I said, in the kingdom of Bohemia. And he actually got his last name from the town that he was born in. The town is called Huss of Huss of Huss of Huss of Huss of Huss of Huss of Huss of Huss of Huss of Huss of Now, at that time, the region in which Huss was born was under the control of the Holy Roman Empire.

Now, don't think ancient Roman Empire. These are two different regions that we're thinking of. The Holy Roman Empire was controlling much of Europe and Asia Minor. It had emperors like Caesar and Caesar Augustus and Nero and Constantine. And that empire fell in the western world in 476 AD, so like a thousand years before Huss was born. The Holy Roman Empire was established in 800 AD when Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne the emperor of the Romans. So for our purposes this morning, what we need to really latch on to is the tight connection between this political empire and the Catholic Church. They were very much intertwined. The Catholic Church very much had a strong influence upon the political authorities of the Holy Roman Empire. During almost all of Huss's life, the Catholic Church was in turmoil. Just eight years after his birth, the Western Schism took place. And this was when the

Catholic Church basically split in two with two popes both vying for power. So there was one who was in Rome, and then there was another one who was in France. They were both claiming to be the true pope.

They were both excommunicating each other. It was chaos in the Catholic Church. And actually during most of the significant years of Huss's ministry, a third pope would be inserted into that equation. So Hollywood could not have written this kind of script. There were three popes. They were all parading around like they had the final authority from God. So that was the historical backdrop to Huss's life. There's very little that we know about his childhood, apart from the fact that his parents were peasants. They were very poor. But around the age of 10, Huss went to live and to be educated at a monastery. And he was a bright, gifted young man. So much so that he continued his studies at the University of Prague with the intention of entering the priesthood. But he didn't have great motives for doing that. He would later admit that his intentions were that he might have a life of comfort and prestige. So we don't know exactly when he was converted. But we know it wasn't when he initially desired to enter into the priesthood. It seemed to happen sometime after he began or even after he completed his studies at the University of Prague. Now after receiving his master's degree in 1396, Huss joined the philosophy department and he began teaching as a professor. And he would go on to become the dean of that department in 1401. So he became a very educated man. And he was involved in academia and scholarship at that time. And it was while he was teaching at university that he came into contact with the writings of another important figure in church history, John Wycliffe.

John Wycliffe was an English pastor. And he was a theologian whose very own life could be studied for his high view of the scriptures and its impact upon his life. He too, like Huss, was a very influential figure in setting the stage for the Reformation. Huss actually came to, or I'm sorry, Wycliffe actually came to be called the morning star of the Reformation because his preaching and his teaching was very much in line with what Luther would later preach and teach against the Catholic Church.

[7 : 53] Now Huss and Wycliffe barely overlapped in history. Wycliffe died when Huss was just a teen. But Huss got in his hands Wycliffe's writings and he read Wycliffe extensively and he found that he greatly agreed with what Wycliffe was saying. Huss became convinced of the same problems that Wycliffe saw in the Catholic Church. Now at that time we've talked about there's three popes that are all trying to say that they are the true pope. And one of those three popes, John XXIII, had declared a crusade against the king of Naples. And to fund his crusade he began selling indulgences. Huss took issue with this.

He took issue with the fact first that the church was going to war and he argued that the church should be praying for its enemies and blessing those who curse it. This wasn't all-out condemnation of war from Huss, but he was condemning the church having such a central role in that war. He also took issue with the sale of those indulgences to finance the war. You might be familiar with indulgences from Martin Luther's own day when he wrote those 95 theses and nailed them to the church door in Wittenberg.

A major point in all of those theses was the sale of indulgences, that people could pay money to have their sins forgiven. Huss argued that it was repentance and not money that would lead to the forgiveness of sins. So Huss saw a lot of abuses within the church and he recognized those abuses because of his high view of the scriptures. You won't find any warrant for the sale of indulgences in the Bible. And that mattered to Huss. It mattered whether or not something could be shown in the scriptures. Huss said this about the very word of God, desiring to hold, believe, and assert whatever is contained in them as long as I have breath in me. So Huss obviously took real issue with the Pope and the authority that the church gave him because Huss believed Christ was the final authority in the church. He would say that the Pope is, quote, not the head nor are the cardinals the entire body of the holy catholic and universal church for Christ alone is the head of that church and all predestined together form the body and each alone is a member of that body because the bride of Christ is united with him. So why did Huss have such a different understanding from the rest of the Catholic church about authority and structure in the church? Because he was reading his Bible and he was believing what his Bible said. The Bible and not the Pope was his final authority because the Bible alone reveals the will of Christ who is indeed the true head of the church. So Huss concluded not that we should get rid of the Pope. He still very much was thinking in Catholic ways, but Huss concluded that a Pope who didn't obey the Bible is not a Pope to be obeyed, and that was very revolutionary at his time. He didn't hold that view lightly. It was a non-negotiable for him. He was willing to die for it. This is what Huss said, for this truth on account of its certitude, a man ought to risk his life. And in this way, a man is not bound to believe the sayings of the saints that are far from Scripture, nor should he believe papal bulls except insofar as what they say is founded on Scripture simply. So because Huss had such a high view of Scripture, he would go on to label popes as heretics and as antichrists because they were putting themselves in the position that only Christ should occupy. So Huss was developing a very divergent view from the Catholic Church on many key doctrines. He still held to much Catholic doctrine that we would reject today, but even so he was still coming to some really good and some really important conclusions from the Word about the Word, its authority, its importance in the life of the

Christian. And the writings of John Wycliffe were very helpful to him in that way. So all of this was happening while Huss was teaching at the University of Prague. All of this development in his theological understanding was happening while he was a professor. So he had a platform to teach these views. He was teaching them to his students. And in the providence of God, Huss was also soon given a platform to preach on these things, to preach as well to the masses. He was appointed to preach at the Bethlehem Chapel in Prague. Now this wasn't a local church. It was more a place where the public preaching would regularly take place. So it was at the center of the Bohemian Reformation, which remember this Reformation is a precursor to the Reformation led by Luther. The Bohemian Reformation, in it the chapel was founded in 1391.

So this is before Huss came along to preach there. It had already been founded. And at the center of the philosophy of those who founded the chapel was the accessibility of the scriptures in the people's language. So Huss became the preacher in this chapel. And he was preaching in the language of the people of Czech. He was preaching in their common language instead of in Latin. And he was also introducing congregational singing back into the worship service. The Catholic Church would often rely on chanting in Latin or trained singers for the singing that took place. So Huss was changing that.

[13 : 58] He was translating portions of the liturgy and several hymns that were in Latin back into Czech. He was doing everything that he could to make the worship of God and the scriptures accessible to the people.

So they understood what they were saying, what they were singing, what they were hearing preached. And thousands of Czechs each week were coming and they were packing out this Bethlehem chapel.

Now considering what Huss was teaching, what he was preaching, it didn't take long for the Catholic Church to take notice in a very negative way. And he was excommunicated twice by two different popes.

They opposed him very strongly. But neither time that Huss was excommunicated did he stop preaching. He continued to open up the word from the pulpit and to preach it in the language of the people.

Now eventually the Catholic Church would place an inner dite upon the city of Prague, which is a ban from the church on certain privileges in worship.

[15 : 05] So in this case, what the church said was, no citizen of Prague could take communion, nor could they be buried on church grounds. And in ways, this hurt, this stung a lot more to Huss and to the people of the Bethlehem chapel.

So to alleviate the pressure that the church was putting on the city, Huss decided he would leave Prague and he would go into exile. And he did that for two years. Now if we think back to last week when we looked at John Bunyan's life, and we remember when he was in prison, he kept busy.

He wrote books. That's what Huss did in exile. He kept busy. He didn't go into exile and live that life of comfort that he had wanted when he first entered the priesthood. Instead, what Huss did is he started writing.

He wrote his most significant work called On the Church or Concerning the Church. And he wrote that while he was in exile. He went so far as to say in that work that popes could make mistakes.

And he said, quote, Those are things you just didn't say at that time. That was incredibly offensive to the church, obviously.

[16 : 19] Now all during this time, Huss wasn't the only problem that the Catholic Church had. If you remember, during Huss' life, the Catholic Church was in turmoil. There was all of this division.

There were multiple popes that were installed all over Europe. We've got three men all claiming to be the pope. So to remedy this situation of three different popes, they said, let's call a council together.

And we'll decide on one pope at this council. Because the last time when they had two popes, and they said, we're going to remedy the problem by installing a third one. And we'll say those other two popes aren't the true pope.

And what happened was the church just had been three popes. So they said, well, we'll fix it now. We will have a council for a true pope. The council was called the Council of Constance.

And that council convened in 1414. A secondary purpose of that council was to get John Huss to come to it and to recant of all that he was teaching.

[17 : 17] Now Huss wasn't too keen on attending, given how the Catholic Church had been treating him. But the king of Hungary at that time, who was something of an ally to John Huss, he said, I will ensure that you have safe passage to come to this council.

I will ensure that no harm comes to you. But he wasn't able to hold true to that promise. A few weeks after arriving in Constance, Huss was arrested.

And he was thrown in prison for over six months. But even during that time, he continued to entrust himself to a faithful God. He would write one of his letters from prison.

And in this letter, he said this, Our Savior raised Lazarus from the dead after the fourth day. He could also snatch me from prison and death. I, an unfortunate man, if it were for his glory, for the advantage of the faithful, and my own good.

Now, Huss would be brought before this council on three separate occasions. And on each occasion, evidence was presented against him. Some of it was true, things that he had said that the church would not be pleased about.

[18 : 28] Other things that he hadn't even said, but was still being accused of. So it wasn't a fair trial from the start. There were often times where he would try to defend his views, and he would be silenced.

And even when he could defend them, what he would do is he would appeal to Christ and the Word. And the Catholic Church didn't want to hear it. There were times where he was urging the church, or there were times where he was urged to submit to the church's authority and to recant.

In response, he said one time, I appeal to Jesus Christ, the only judge who is almighty and completely just. In his hands, I plead my cause, not on the basis of false witnesses and erring counsels, but on truth and justice.

And over and over again, Huss would say he would only recant if it could be proven that he was wrong from the scriptures. And never did the council say, here's what God's Word says, John Huss, here is where you're wrong.

They refused to provide him that kind of a response. And so, he refused to recant. And he would say things about not going against his conscience, which sounds a whole lot like Martin Luther, who also was being called by the Catholic Church to recant a hundred years later at the Diet of Worms.

[19 : 47] And Luther would say, my conscience is captive to the Word of God. Now, Huss was ultimately found guilty of heresy, not surprisingly, and he was sentenced to death.

So, on July 6th, in 1415, Huss was let out of his cell to be executed. And in one last plea, he asked that the church officials would prove to him from the scriptures how he had erred, like before they didn't.

And then he fell to his knees, and he prayed, Lord Jesus Christ, I implore thee, forgive all my enemies for thy great mercy's sake. And thou knowest that they have falsely accused me, and have produced false witnesses, and have concocted false articles against me.

He then was dressed in his priestly vestments, only to then be stripped of those vestments one by one. He was defrocked, and curses were placed upon him with each article of clothing that was removed.

Then a tall hat with demons on that hat was placed upon his head, and the hat itself read, not just heretic, but arch heretic, leader of the heretics.

[21 : 04] And he was led off to be executed. His hands were tied behind his back, he was chained to the stake, and then wood was piled all the way up to his neck.

He was asked one last time, pleaded with one last time, John Huss, recant. And in response, he prayed, Lord Jesus, it is for you that I patiently endure this cruel death.

I pray you have mercy on my enemies. So the flames engulfed him, and he was heard reciting a psalm. Some also say that he was singing at that time.

So John Huss died the death of a martyr on July 6th, 1514, around the age of 40. The man from Goosetown was burned at the stake. But the impact of his life didn't end there.

It's true that it would take another 100 years before the Reformation really took off, but Huss himself was very instrumental in laying the foundation for that Reformation.

[22 : 03] I mentioned Martin Luther was greatly influenced by Huss. I think this story is worth sharing. So about 100 years later, 1519, Martin Luther found himself in a debate with a Catholic theologian and priest named Johann Eck.

And this debate took place at the University of Leipzig. So the debate came to be called the Leipzig Debate. And in this debate, this Catholic priest, Johann Eck, lashed out at Luther, and he called Luther a Hussite.

Now, Luther himself was also slinging around the name-calling. Luther called Eck that little glory-hungry beast. So you think all these reformers are proper, distinguished men, but you read about them and you realize sometimes they were letting their tongues fly.

And so Eck calls Luther a Hussite. In other words, he called Luther a follower of John Huss. And he called Luther this because Luther was saying many of the same things that John Huss was.

He was talking about the final authority in the church residing with Christ and with his word and not with the pope or with church councils. So Eck wanted to get Luther backed into a corner.

[23 : 20] And Eck said, in essence, well, you're a Hussite because Luther was articulating the same position as this heretic John Huss, which meant just one thing. If you're a Hussite, you too, Martin Luther, are a heretic according to the Catholic Church.

Now, this was a massive charge, obviously. Matthew Barrett has written an excellent book on the history of the Reformation. It's called Reformation as Renewal.

And this is what he said in that moment when Eck called Luther a Hussite. Quote, The mere mention of Huss sent shivers up the spines of listeners because at a place like the University of Leipzig, which was founded by opponents of the Hussite movement.

So those opponents actually had come from the University of Prague where Huss was very influential and they had started the University of Leipzig.

So for him to say, you are a Hussite in that very place, it would be like a Michigan football player calling another player a Buckeye in the big house.

[24 : 28] I mean, this was like terrible to say. You could not say such a thing. So Eck was laying this charge on thick. But Luther didn't immediately embrace this association.

In fact, when the debate took a break, Luther did like a quick refresher on Huss and he read up on what Huss had written. He wasn't as familiar with John Huss as you might think him to be.

And he came back from the debate, or from that break to the debate, and he basically said, yeah, you're right. I'm a Hussite. And this sent shockwaves through the room. The Duke of Saxony was present at this debate.

And Luther's self-identification with Huss was so shocking that the Duke could not contain himself. And he actually audibly cursed and left the room. Those shockwaves extended beyond the walls of that room, though.

They went all through Germany at that time. The debate at Leipzig is considered this incredibly pivotal point in Luther's relationship with the Catholic Church.

[25 : 31] Up until that debate, Luther was still hoping that he could reconcile with the Church. He wanted to actually remain a faithful Catholic priest.

And so he hoped that that debate at Leipzig would help to bring about Reformation from not dividing from the Church, but from within the Church. But for Luther to willingly associate himself with John Huss, that was like the straw that broke the camel's back.

Matthew Barrett would write, quote, quote, now the divide between the Reformation and Rome was naked, exposed for all to see. So even though John Huss had been dead for 100 years, he was right at the center of this great divide that took place in 1519.

Now it was said after the debate that some of Huss' followers actually wrote to Luther, and they got a copy of Huss' book on the Church into Luther's hands. And Luther read it, and he was enamored with it, and he joyfully concluded, saying, I have hitherto taught and held all the opinions of John Huss unawares.

In short, we are all Hussites without knowing it. So Huss had this strong impact on Luther. How might he have an impact on us? Three takeaways for us to consider together from John Huss' life.

[26 : 54] The first is this. He lived upon the Word of God. Huss didn't waver from his conviction in what the Bible said. He didn't waver from his conviction that it was not any human authority, but the Bible itself that was to be our final standard, our final authority.

So we've talked of this time and time again. When he was confronted about his teachings, what did Huss do? He turned back to the Bible, and he said, show me here where it says such things, or I believe this because it says such things.

Time and again, he was called to recant, and he would simply say, show me where I'm wrong from the Bible. He once said this, therefore, faithful Christian, seek the truth, listen to the truth, learn the truth, love the truth, speak the truth, adhere to truth, and defend truth to death.

That's an encouragement to us to both know our Bibles, to stand upon our convictions concerning what the Bible says, because the Bible is truth.

So Huss lived upon the Word. He also died looking to the Lord. You know the great cloud of witnesses in Hebrews chapter 11 into chapter 12.

[28 : 15] Huss joined that great cloud. He faithfully followed Christ, even to death. When Huss found himself chained to that stake at his execution, he said, my Lord Jesus Christ was bound with a harder chain than this one for my sake, so why should I be ashamed of this rusty chain?

And when he was called to recant again, he said, what I taught with my lips, I will seal with my blood. So Huss is an example to us as we seek to live out Hebrews 12, 1 to 2.

It reads this, therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

So in life and in death, Huss looked to the Lord. And he found his comfort, he found his security in the Lord. He would say in a letter that he wrote from prison, beseech the Lord to grant me the assistance of his spirit, that I may confess his name even unto death.

I shall stand in need of his divine aid, although I am confident he will not suffer me to be tried beyond my strength. And so as we consider the place of John Huss in church history, we too should be encouraged to look to Jesus and to be spurred on to run the race of the Christian life with endurance, knowing who supplies us with that strength that we need.

[29 : 59] And then the third takeaway is that John Huss put all of his hope in the word made flesh. He lived his life believing there's one mediator between God and man, and it is the man, Jesus Christ.

One person through whom we are saved, it's Jesus Christ. Christ, no ordinary man, no pope, is to have that place that Christ has. And we're saved not by any works that we can do, no indulgences that we can buy, no good deeds that we can perform.

We're saved by grace through faith in the finished work of Christ, and that grace that faith is all a gracious gift from God. To his dying breath, Huss confessed Christ and Christ alone.

Luther would later write an introduction to a collection of Huss' letters. And this is what Luther said of John Huss. The man who, in the agony of death, invoked with so firm a heart Jesus, the Son of God, who for such a cause delivered up his body to the flames with so strong a faith and so steadfast a constancy.

If such a man, I repeat, deserves not to be considered a generous and intrepid martyr and true follower of Christ, it will be difficult for anyone to be saved. Jesus Christ himself has declared, he who confesses me before men, him will I also confess before my Father.

[31 : 27] Time and again, Huss confessed Christ. Well, we'll close with one final story. Maybe you've heard of the saying, your goose is cooked.

That's kind of a popular saying, a known saying. It's something that means, you know, when you're in great trouble, there's no way out. Your goose is cooked. There's good reason to believe that that saying originated with John Huss.

Now, that might sound kind of disrespectful on the surface to draw attention to this kind of humorous saying and connect it to a martyr for the cause of Christ, Christ. But it seems that Huss himself and his followers actually coined something of that phrase.

Huss often himself would say that he was the goose. He would talk about himself as the goose. And it was a term of endearment between him and his friends and colleagues. He understood that geese aren't really like all that significant.

They're not all that strong and powerful. And he kind of embraced that weak idea of being the goose and living upon the strength that Christ provided. A companion of John Huss named John Cardinalis wrote a letter to those who supported Huss when Huss was in prison.

[32 : 43] And he wrote this letter to kind of update them on Huss's condition and to encourage them. And this is what his friend said of Huss. The goose is not yet cooked and is not afraid of being cooked.

So the goose did not fear death. He was sure that God would continue to bring reformation in the church even if he himself died. He knew that he was not, that he was but one man, one ordinary man that the Lord was using.

Now you might be familiar with the book written by John Fox, Fox's Book of Martyrs. It was published in the 1500s. It's a book in which it gives countless accounts.

That's not a good phrase. It gives lots and lots of accounts of Christians who died at the hands of the Catholic Church, who gave up their lives for Christ at the hands of the Catholic Church.

And Fox included John Huss in his book. And he shared that at the execution of Huss, as the wood was being piled up to his neck, that Huss turned to his executioner and he said, today you burn a goose, but in 100 years a swan will arise, which you will prove unable to boil or roast.

[33 : 57] Fox then said, if he were prophetic, he must have meant Martin Luther, who shone about 100 years after. Now this story has been widely shared in church history. It became very popular, so much so that many portraits, many paintings of Martin Luther often include a goose in the background as kind of a reference to John Huss.

Martin Luther himself even thought that Huss was in some way predicting his coming. In 1531, Luther would say, St. John Huss prophesied about me when he wrote from his prison in Bohemia, they will roast a goose now, but in 100 years they will hear a swan singing that they will have to put up with, and that is the way it will be if God wills.

Huss likely didn't say that. Huss likely was not a prophet in that way. He wasn't some kind of prophet who could predict almost to the day the arrival of Luther onto the scene of history.

That story, like many such stories, often does have something that's true associated with it. And I think this is the truth of that story.

At one point, John Huss wrote a letter to some friends back in Prague while he was in prison. He wrote this letter about six months before his death. He wanted to encourage them.

[35 : 18] He wanted to assure them. He wanted them to take heart. And he wanted to remind them that though he may be imprisoned, God is continuing to build his church.

God is continuing to build his kingdom. And he wanted to make clear that God will use even more gifted men, even more gifted women, to continue that work.

So Huss talks about himself in this letter as a goose, which we said is not a very impressive bird. And he talks about these other people, not people that he is sure of by name, not people he's prophesying, but simply remembering that God uses people.

He writes of these other people as falcons and eagles. And this is what Huss says in his words. And this same truth has sent to Prague many falcons and eagles, which surpass the other birds in sharpness of vision, in replacement of the one weak and easily eliminated goose.

High above, they are flying back and forth in this grace of God and snatching many birds for Christ Jesus, who will make them strong and will establish all his faithful.

[36 : 28] So this is no specific prophecy. He's not saying in a hundred years, somebody's going to rise up that you can't boil. But it is a competent trust in God. Huss was sure that God would continue to save sinners in his grace, whether Huss was in prison or Huss was in the pulpit of the Bethlehem Chapel.

John Fox thought that Huss must have had Martin Luther in mind when he spoke, a man who would come a hundred years later. But isn't it more likely that Huss had another man on his mind, one who came before Huss and who wrote what we now have as inspired scripture.

In his letter, Huss sounded a whole lot more like Paul when Paul was imprisoned and he wrote to his son in the faith, Timothy. This is what Paul said in 2 Timothy 2, 9-10.

I am suffering, bound with chains as a criminal, but the word of God is not bound. Therefore, I endure everything for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

So whether Huss meant to echo Paul or not, may that serve to us as an encouragement. God will build his kingdom, God will build his church, and the gates of hell will not prevail.

[37 : 48] John Huss understood this. John Huss believed this. He once said, for whoso dies for Christ, he is conqueror and is delivered from all misery and attains the eternal joy to which may it please our Savior to bring us all.

Huss approached those gates of hell, those gates of death, not in overwhelming fear, not in sorrow, but singing a hymn to God. He could say, I am willingly glad to die today.

He could say that because he was sure of what the scriptures that he held so dearly taught. He was sure of what they said and he believed it.

As Philippians 1.21 says, for to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father, we give you thanks for the life of John Huss.

What great grace you gave to him. What marvelous ways in which you worked through him by your spirit in Bohemia and indeed what an example he is to us.

[38 : 59] We pray, Father, that you would do the same in our lives, that you would give us boldness and confidence, that we would stand upon the truth of your word, that we would rest entirely upon the finished work of your Son and that we would be willing to lay down our lives in the same way.

Help us to believe the words of Scripture, that to live is Christ and to die is gain. We thank you for this time we've had together and we pray this in Christ's name. Amen.

We're dismissed. We thank you for this time and thank you for this time overnight. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thanks for this time and thank you for this time and thank you for this time to work tomorrow.

Amen. Thank you for this time if you were watching for■■■■■