

The Goose Before the Swan

The Life and Ministry of Jan Hus

October 27, 2019

Hebrews 13:7

Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith.

To the Glory of God

Now the verse that Brother Vern just read to you is where the writer of **Hebrews** instructs the people of the Christian Church to “remember”. And we are to remember people who have two characteristics:

1. Those who led you
2. Those who spoke the Word of God to you

And then the writer goes on to say that we are to “do” two things with those who led us and who spoke the Word of God to us:

1. Consider the result of their conduct
2. Imitate their faith

Now the way this is written in the original Greek tells me that the people we are to “remember” are dead, because the writer doesn’t say that we are to merely consider their conduct, but we are to consider the *result* of their conduct, and you simply cannot do that until the life of that person is over and there is no more conduct to consider. You see, because we are fallen creatures, as long as somebody is alive, they are able to destroy a lifetime of service and faithfulness. But after a person is dead and with the Lord, the result of his entire life can be *considered*, and his faith *imitated*.

So, the Holy Bible teaches us that we are to have heroes of the Faith who are now dead; men who led the Church, and men who preached and taught the Word of God during their lives. And we are told to “consider the end result of their conduct”. And we are told to

then “imitate” or “copy” or “emulate their faith”. In fact, the writer of **Hebrews** thought this was so important that he included in his Epistle his own brief biographical sketch of several of the OT heroes of the Faith, which is what we call today the “11th Chapter of **Hebrews**”.

Now anytime you do something like this, there is a danger. And the danger is *not* that we might get some historical facts wrong or get some dates mixed up, but that we will, even slightly, *replace* inerrant and infallible Scripture with the weak and frail *experiences* of other human beings, and that is always a danger, no matter how important those people may be.

And yet, we see that the writer of **Hebrews** tells us right here to risk that danger and to go ahead and “remember” them. And so, if God is pleased, I will take this Lord’s Day, and also next week, to preach a biography of one of the great heroes of the Christian Faith that I pray will be an inspiration to you, and that will encourage you to be utterly fearless and to take great risks in this radical Love of Jesus Christ.

Now, on October 31, 1517, an Augustinian monk, who was known then as simply “Brother Martin”, nailed a list of 95 different “Issues of Concern” that he had developed about serious spiritual subjects that were troubling him to the front door of the Church at Wittenberg, Germany. Martin Luther hoped that the local Bishop would read what he had written, and small, *incremental* changes could take place in the visible church so that the dominant religious system of that day, that called itself “Christian”, could become more biblical.

Luther had no idea what he had done. Becoming the focal point of the greatest Revival in the History of the world was the farthest thing from his mind. To his dismay, the local Bishop simply threw Luther’s 95 Thesis in the trash, and then commanded him to recant and repent that he had even written them. No discussion, no debate; as far as the Bishop was concerned Luther was a silly, insignificant monk who had no business challenging the majesty of Rome, and all that Luther should do was to repent and go back and be a monk.

But Luther persisted. And in the German city of Leipzig, during the months of June and July of 1519, Martin Luther stood before his nemesis, Johann Eck, to debate the Issues of “Human Free Will” and the “Grace of God”. But as the Debate began, to the shock of everyone there, Martin Luther stood and loudly proclaimed, “*Ich bin ein Hussite!*” (“*I am a Hussite!*”), meaning that he was a follower of the Teachings of

Jan Hus, which in 1519 was tantamount to a public confession that Luther was a heretic.

So, God took the simple act of seeking Reform from a humble man and He blessed it. And from that weak and frail effort to bring some small measure of Reform to the visible Church, an unstoppable tidal wave of Truth washed over the entire world, as, once again, God's Grace in Salvation took center stage. And that Revival has now lasted 502 years.

Today, those of us who embrace the Grace of God in Salvation are called "Protestants". Our Doctrine and Theology is called "Reformed". And the Banner that flies over us is "The Word of God". And the various *flavors* of "Protestantism" that now stand upon the earth like "Baptist", "Presbyterians", and "Anglicans" all uphold the *foundational* Tenets that once shook the world that are best summarized by two Latin phrases:

1. *Sola Scriptura*
2. *Sola Fide*

These two simple Statements brought great persecution, and even exile and death, to those who espoused them five centuries ago. Because these two Statements, more than any others, shook the Roman religious system down to its very core, while they freed countless millions from the brutal and violent tyranny that Rome had imposed on the masses.

***Sola Scriptura*: the "Formal Cause" of the Reformation**

The first Question was: *Who/What has the "Final Authority" to "bind the conscience" and to determine "Right" from "Wrong"?* Rome answered: *"The Pope, in his Authority as the "Vicar of Christ"*. The Reformers responded, *"No! Scripture and Scripture Alone has the Final Authority."*

***Sola Fide*: the "Material Cause" of the Reformation**

The second Question was: *"Are lost people made Righteous by Grace through Faith PLUS adherence to the Sacraments, attendance to*

the Mass, and participation in the 'Rite of Penance'?" Rome responded, "Yes! Without all of that, a lost person remains unrighteous." The Reformers said, "No! Lost people are made Righteous by Faith ALONE".

So, it is very important to understand that we are NOT separated from Rome today because of Issues that don't matter. What divides us are very *serious* and *eternal* Issues of which there is no middle ground, no commonality, and no area where we may simply "agree to disagree". No, the Reality is that one of us is wrong, *eternally* wrong. And the *only* solution, the *sole* Solution to the Division, is that one of us needs to repent and recant. So, until Rome *repents* of their wholly *unbiblical* positions, and until the Leaders of the Roman system *recant* for teaching false doctrine, there can *never* be a reconciliation. And there *shouldn't* be.

Therefore, we may hold hands with Romans as we fight against Abortion, and the normalization of Sexual Perversity, and a whole host of other Social Issues. And we may be persecuted alongside Romans, and we may even go to jail with Romans. But we can't go to Heaven with Romans. Protestants and Romans have been separated for over 500 years, and we are separated this morning, because we don't agree how lost people are made Righteous, and who/what has "Final Authority" to bind the conscience.

Now we also passionately disagree with a whole host of other Issues like the fabricated Doctrine of Purgatory, and the entire Issue of Mariology within the larger Roman religion. But again, the Reason we disagree with those other Issues is because of our adherence to the concept of *Sola Scriptura* that says:

All Teaching, All Preaching, every Doctrine we believe, ALL Counselling, ALL Correction, yea, our entire Theological System, must come "*from the Scriptures*" and "*from the Scriptures ALONE.*"

But why was it so important to Martin Luther for him to begin the Debate in 1519 with the public proclamation that he was a disciple of Jan Hus? Why Hus? Of all the people in Church History that Luther *could* have referenced, why bring up the "*Goosefather*"¹? The profound

¹ Hus was born in the city of Husinec, (Goosetown), in what is now called the Czech Republic; and is its most famous citizen.

effect that Jan Hus had on Martin Luther is *exactly* why we need to know about this man.

Today, in the center square of Prague, in the Czech Republic, is a large statue. And in the center of the statue is a man, leaning forward, looking toward the great Church, which is in the center of the old part of town. The man in that statue is Jan Hus.

So, just who was Jan Hus? Hus was a preacher, an academic, and a *forerunner* to the Protestant Reformation. And Hus was important, because, like John Wycliffe before him, he not only challenged the terrible *abuses* of the priesthood of the Roman religious system that were going on during that day, but Hus actually attacked the foundational *Theology* of Rome, including that the Office of Pope was *illegitimate*, and, a century before Luther, Hus declared clearly and repeatedly that Justification was by Grace ALONE through Faith ALONE in Jesus Christ ALONE, and NOT through the Sacraments.

Jan Hus was born in 1372, and he died by being burned at the stake in 1415. So, his entire life consisted of only 43 years. But, O, how he lived that 43 years! May God help us not to waste our time here on earth. Hus was born in the town of Husinec, in what is now called the Czech Republic. Back in the 14th Century, that area was known as "Bohemia", and was part of a collection of city-states known as the "Holy Roman Empire." Now Husinec actually means "*Goosetown*", so Jan Hus was "*John of Goosetown*", or "*John the Goose*."

And Hus hated that name. And he also hated being poor. And he also hated not being known. So, Hus decided to go to Seminary, *not* because he sensed the need to be saved, or because he wanted to pursue a pious life, but simply because, in that day, being a Priest was safe, and offered some degree of notoriety, and allowed him to escape the poverty of his family.

Now coming from such humble beginnings, and because he was a farmer by trade, Hus was and is revered by the Czech people in their battles against Germany, even more so than anything he did to help ignite the Reformation. We have to understand that, in His Providence, God has used "Patriotic Nationalism" in many different people and countries to help spread the Gospel around the world. For example, it was because of National Jealousy between the kings of two different countries that allowed for Martin Luther to not be killed, even after the Pope had put a bounty on his head. And just 77 years after Hus was

martyred, it was the Nationalism of Portugal against Spain that allowed for King Ferdinand of Spain to finance the excursions of an obviously delusional Italian, named Christopher Columbus, who said that God had showed him that the world was round and that he could reach the East by sailing West.

Today, in the Czech Republic, Hus is primarily seen as the man who helped ignite the separation from Germany which gave the Czech people their own homeland. But those of us, who love Jesus, see Hus as the early hero of the great Awakening known today as the "Reformation."

In 1390, Hus enrolled at the University of Prague. Now keep in mind that the Czech people were always treated as "red-headed step-children" to the German people, who dominated all of life. Even in the University, everything taught to the students came from the "German Perspective", and that included Theology as well. Almost all of the Professors were German, and all of the larger churches were filled with German thought, and German practices.

So, when this poor, peasant Czech boy rose through the ranks and became a powerful Preacher, the people responded, not merely because his sermons were inspiring and biblical (they were both), but also because by supporting Hus they could "stick their finger" in the eye of the German elite. We know from Scripture that God had "laid His Hand" upon Hus and has given him Unction and an Anointing in his preaching.

Hus received a BA in 1393, an MA in 1396, and was ordained to preach in 1400. He began his Masters in 1401, but never finished, because in 1402 he was set in as the Preacher of the Bethlehem Chapel at the University of Prague, which back then, was a very prestigious position. So, Hus' responsibilities included preaching to the Czech people, in the Czech language, which gave him amazing credibility with the average citizen of Prague. So, as the people flocked to hear him, and as they applauded his Sermons, it was NOT just the fact that Hus was preaching the Word of God as it ought to be preached, but also because here was a Czech becoming a rock star during the time when to be a Czech relegated you to second class positions. Yet God used that Nationalism to His Glory.

Now the Bible teaches us to be very careful who we pick to be our spiritual Teachers, because we will be greatly influenced by the men

who lead us. And that was true of Jan Hus as well. And so, it wasn't long before Hus began to use many of the phrases and terminology of the man who had so greatly influenced him, John Wycliffe, the shining star of England, who, in 1384, had been strangled to death for committing the crime of translating the Bible into the English language. Hus was *powerfully* affected by Wycliffe's life as well as his Theology, and Hus began to incorporate Wycliffe's Teachings into his Sermons. Hus also began to develop his *own* Theology that emphasized the "primacy of the Scriptures" and a "rejection of Medieval Thought and Practice in both the Church and in all of life." In fact, Hus defended Wycliffe's Teachings with such tenacity that one historian called Hus "Wycliffe's bulldog"²

So, the people flocked to hear Hus and responded *favorably* to what he was teaching, *partly* because God had opened their hearts to hear the Truth, but *partly* because *anything* that would insult the Roman system that dominated the Holy Roman Empire was popular with the Czech people.

So, a collision with the Roman Authorities was inevitable. It was only a matter of time. And so, at some point in either 1408 or 1409, Hus ran afoul of the local Arch-Bishop of Prague, and the Bishop complained to the Pope. Now, during those years (1378-1417), there was a dispute as to just who was the legitimate Pope. And, at one point, there were actually three different men who all laid claim to be the rightful heir of the Throne of St. Peter and the visible embodiment of Jesus Christ on the earth (Vicar)³

In 1409, the "Pisan Pope"⁴ formally condemned Hus and excommunicated him very quickly (so as to get the jump on the other popes). However, because there was great confusion as to just who the Pope really was, the sentence of death was not carried out, yet. Most scholars teach that the main reason that Hus was so quickly condemned was NOT because Hus himself was seen as being so heretical, but rather because the Movement that Wycliffe had started was growing and would not die. The Romans wrongly thought that by publicly killing John Wycliffe so violently, that others espousing the same Theology would be scared off. Instead, God raised up literally hundreds

²*The Unquenchable Flame*, p. 30

³ See the *Avignon Papacy* and the *House of Borgia*

⁴ The Pope, who was recognized by the majority of the nations in Europe; and who was located in the city of Pisa rather than Rome

of thousands of Wycliffe converts to preach all over Europe, of which Jan Hus was one.

No what is interesting is that Jan Hus was being excommunicated at this point for "Disobedience", NOT Heresy. Back during the Middle Ages, people were excommunicated for a variety of reasons. And Excommunication was seen as a "Divine Warning" and was NOT "Eternally Fatal", unless you died while underneath it. So, at this point, Hus was excommunicated for not being submissive to the Pope, which is how Rome characterized *anyone* who followed Wycliffe. So, all that the Romans were doing was trying to scare Hus into abandoning Wycliffe's Teachings and falling in line with Rome, precisely because they saw that the Czech people *adored* Hus, and they feared that unless they did something, that eventually, the Czech people would rise up and demand their own Independence.

Now History tells us that unless you allow people to speak their minds, and to ask Questions without retaliating against them, unless you allow ideas and complaints to be heard and examined fairly, all you do is thrust those ideas onto the world stage. We must understand that Truth doesn't fear Questions. Truth doesn't fear Objections. It doesn't fear Analysis. If something is true, then it has *always* been true; it is true now, and it will *always be* true. Truth is Truth, wherever it is found and whoever speaks it. And that is true, whether we're talking about Nature or Mathematics or God or Scripture.

So, to condemn someone for asking an honest Question only reveals the fear of those in charge. To try to *artificially* silence people who sincerely disagree is to do nothing but give their position credibility. So, Truth is our best friend. Without Truth, we have nothing. So, if you have the Truth on your side, you argue the Truth. And if you have the Facts on your side, you argue the Facts. But if you have neither the Truth nor the Facts, then you pound the table, and raise your voice, and call people names.

So, the more Hus preached, the more Questions were raised about the unbiblical and Man-made doctrines and practices of Rome. But instead of giving those Questions a solid Answer, the Leaders of the Roman religious system merely pounded the table, they raised their voices, and they called Hus names. And all that did was to give Hus credibility. Even today, to suggest that we are sinning, simply because we say that "Popes have no more right to invent Doctrine than anyone

else", is ludicrous. Show us, from Scripture, where Popes have that Power, and we will be silent. Other than that, perhaps the Popes should be silent. I mean, if human beings have that kind of Power, by virtue of their Office, then what is Scripture to be used for, a paper weight? A door stop? No. God went to great lengths to give us the 66 Books of the Bible so we would develop what we believe and what we teach from these Books, and from these Books- ALONE!

Now we have to understand that, it is at this point, that the rubber meets the road for Jan Hus. There were, no doubt, *many* men whom God moved upon to speak this very same Truth *before, during,* and *after* Hus. But the Truth is that, most of them, *withered* under the pressure of being condemned by the most powerful Organization on earth at that time. Remember, the Roman system had all of the kings, and all the Governments, and all of the armies, of all of the nations of Europe during those days. And there was one man, the Pope, who was the head of it all. So, when the Pope spoke, Nations trembled. The Pope could raise up or cast down the strongest king on earth with a single word. And so, the Pope was feared above all men on earth. You cross the Pope and your life was not worth a dime.

So, to stand and condemn some of the most important and sacred Teachings of Rome was usually a death sentence. And many a man, who started out to reform the Church ended up begging the Pope to spare his life by recanting everything he had ever said or written. So, we not talking about "human bravery" here. We are talking about God raising up a man to unapologetically speak the Truth in the face of torture and death. So, this is being rock-solid in *what* you believe and *why* you believe it.

We also have to remember that many of the Issues that the great martyrs of the Faith stood to defy Rome about were NOT Issues that troubled the majority of the people at that time. Who cares whether sinners are justified by Grace through Faith alone or through the Sacraments? Who is willing to lose everything you own and be tortured, and then die over that? Even in our day, I dare say that *some* people in the modern church might be willing to suffer to some extent over the great Social and Political Issues of our day. But how many of us would be willing to die over the Doctrine of the Trinity? How many people today would be willing to be tortured over the Issue of God's Sovereignty in Salvation? And how many people today would be willing

to just abandon Monday Night Football, much less die, over how sinners are made Righteous?

But John Wycliffe was. And so was Martin Luther. And so was Jan Hus. And I pray that God will raise up ten thousand men in our day who are not only willing to suffer and to lose everything they own, but who will be willing to die over the Truth of God's Word.

Now many of us are familiar with Martin Luther's 95 Thesis. Luther nailed those Thesis on the door of the Church at Wittenberg on October 31, 1517. And the bulk of those 95 Thesis had to do with the "Selling of Indulgences". Now an "Indulgence" was a formal and official document signed by a Bishop or Arch-Bishop or Cardinal or Pope that allowed for a person to obtain Forgiveness and Absolution for Sins that had not yet been committed. So, for example, a King might want to throw a three-day Event to celebrate a war victory. So, that King would petition the Church for an Indulgence, because he knows that the three-day Celebration will quickly become nothing but a drunken orgy. So, for a "fee", the Church grants the King "Pre-Forgiveness" or Pre-Absolution" for the Sins that may be committed in the upcoming Celebration. And of course, you can see how this became a *major* way to raise funds for any project that the Church deemed important, *including* the construction of St. Peter's Basilica.⁵

One of the 95 Issues that deeply troubled Martin Luther was put like this:

#48: Christians are to be taught that the Pope, in granting Indulgences, needs and thus desires their devout prayer more than their money

... but Luther didn't *initiate* that one. 100 years earlier, Jan Hus wrote:

"If the Pope has the Power to deliver the soul from Purgatory, would he not rather do it for love than for money?"

Now what is not usually mentioned in biographies of Hus is that his condemnation of the Selling of Indulgences was birthed from his

⁵ This Monument (built from 18 April, 1506- 18 November 1626) symbolizes the Roman religious system. It was built by raising money from the poor peasants of Europe- by promising them that if they would give- their loved ones would be released from Purgatory. Johann Tetzel was the chief fund-raiser and told the people, "As soon as the coin in the coffer rings- the soul from Purgatory springs"

belief in both the Purpose of the Church itself, and his understanding of Predestination. In 1409, Hus said:

“The Unity of the Church consists in the ‘Bond of Predestination’, since the individual members are united by Predestination, and in the Goal of Blessedness, since all her sons are ultimately united in Blessedness. Therefore, the Chief Abbot of the Church is not the Pope but Christ. And it is possible for people to be *in* the (visible) Church without being *of* the (invisible) Church.”⁶

... so Hus’ belief in Predestination fashioned everything else that he taught. And this tells us that, at last 100 years *before* Luther, “Predestination” and the concept of “Human Free Will” along with “Divine Prerogative in Salvation” were Issues being *strongly* debated in the visible Church and which *contradicted* what Rome taught.

The Reality is that Calvin never taught a single thing about Predestination that Luther had not taught before him. And Luther never taught anything about this subject that Hus didn’t teach before him. And Hus never taught a single thing about God’s Sovereignty in Salvation that Augustine hadn’t taught before him. And Augustine didn’t teach anything that Paul had not taught before him.

But what is not commonly known is that the Apostle Paul never taught a single thing about Predestination that Jesus had not taught before him. And Jesus never taught anything about Predestination that Moses had not taught before Him. So, “God’s Sovereignty in Salvation”, the “Doctrine of Predestination” or the “Doctrine of Sovereign Election”, is not only purely *biblical*, but it has been taught by every major Teacher in both the Scriptures and in Church History since Day 1.

Like all the Reformers, Hus never *invented* a single Doctrine. He simply preached and taught what the Bible actually said, and if that went against the Teachings of Rome, then so be it. And all the “noise” coming from Rome, all the pounding of the table, all the loud shouting, and all the name calling, simply meant that Rome was wrong. So, Hus’ motivation was *not* to simply “go against Rome.” His Goal was to understand and then faithfully herald what the Scriptures infallibly revealed.

⁶ Jan Hus; *De Ecclesia*; pg. 57

Hus' Arguments were so solid, so right, so logically correct, who could reject them? And yet they cost him his life. But to prove to you that what Hus taught was as "right as rain", nearly six centuries later, in 1999, Pope John Paul II expressed "deep regret for the cruel death inflicted" on Hus, and added "deep sorrow" for Hus's death and praised his "moral courage". Now this may seem to us to be "too little, too late", but for any Pope to express "deep regret" is the highest level of apology offered by the Roman system, short of out-right Repentance.⁷

At some point later in his life, Hus resigned his position at Bethlehem Chapel and began to go throughout the countryside of what was then called "Bohemia", and preached the Gospel to the farmers and peasants. It was during this time that Hus broke away from Wycliffe on the Issue of the Lord's Table. So, while it is true that God used John Wycliffe in a very powerful way, God did not bring Wycliffe into "all Truth". So, until the day he was strangled to death, Wycliffe firmly held to the concept of the actual Presence of Christ in the Sacrament. He denied the Roman Man-made Teaching of "Transubstantiation", but held that Christ's literal Presence was in the Bread.

Hus rejected that and formulated a Teaching that helped Luther and Calvin and those who followed them develop what we now hold to be true, and which the Catechism that we are currently going over teaches. Also, Rome began teaching that, while the people can eat the Bread at the Lord's Table, they can't drink from the Cup. The Cup is reserved only for the Priesthood. Hus rejected that. He taught that, if believers can participate in the Lord's Table at all, then they can participate all the way. We can all thank Jan Hus for that.

It was also during this time that Hus wrote what was, perhaps, his greatest contribution, a book entitled "*De Ecclesia*", "On the Church", where Hus outlined what the Bible taught about the Church. This book has so inspired me that beginning in January of 2020, I will preach through a series of Messages on the Church. What is fascinating, though, is that the first ten Chapters of *De Ecclesia* are really nothing more than a *re-statement* of what John Wycliffe taught about the Church.

And this verifies that the *first* thing God will do in any genuine spiritual Awakening is to cause His people to *re-discover* the Grace of God. And in that re-discovery, we will see what God has revealed about

⁷ Allen Jr., John L. (15 September 2009). "The German shepherd bids farewell to a 'wolf in winter'". *National Catholic Reporter*.

God's absolute Sovereignty in Salvation. But the *second* thing God does is to help His people re-discover the importance of the Church.

Finally, in 1415, Hus was "invited" to come to a Church Council to be held in the city of Constance. He was promised "safe passage" there and back. Now we need to remember that Hus had already been excommunicated, twice. And the only reason he had not already been killed was because of the hostility that existed between the Holy Roman Emperor and the Emperor of Bohemia. So, there is no doubt that when he was promised safety, Hus knew full well that they intended to imprison and kill him. But, evidently, in the life of a chosen Martyr, there comes a moment when the individual knows that his time is up. All through History, this same story is told, and one by one the condemned voluntarily goes to face his accusers, only to be betrayed and murdered. So, whether God revealed it to him or not, Hus *voluntarily* went to the Council of Constance to defend his Teachings and to uphold the various Doctrines that had become his hallmark, like the concept of both "Sola Scriptura" and "Sola Fide"⁸, the Doctrine of Predestination, Sovereign Election, and the Condemnation of Indulgences.

So, Hus arrived at Constance, and was immediately arrested and imprisoned. And even though he was promised that he could actually address the Council, this was denied him. Hus was only allowed to answer Questions. On July 6, 1415, Hus was taken from prison and brought into the Council. Before he entered, very colorful and elaborate priestly garments were put on him. So, he walked in, decked out in the bright ecclesiastical clothes of a man of God, as the accusations against him were read, one-by-one. And as each one was read, Hus was allowed to either agree with it or deny it. And as he agreed that this is what he believed and taught, a part of his priestly garment was forcibly removed from him.

At each accusation, Hus was asked, "*Will you recant?*" And at each time he was asked, Hus replied, "*No!*" The Purpose of all this was to have both a Theological and a Visible Experience of Hus being publicly defrocked and shamed by the Leaders of the visible Church of the Lord Jesus Christ. And this was done, of course, to strike fear into anyone else who was even thinking about going against Rome.

⁸ Even though these two Doctrines did not go by those Latin terms until the 16th Century- the essence of both Doctrines were being taught for many hundreds of years by many different people before the Reformers made them the Causes of the Reformation.

Hus finally stood before them all, naked, excommunicated, condemned, defrocked, and yet utterly unapologetic. It was at this time that a tall white paper dunce hat, that was illustrated with devils, was placed on his head to signify what a fool Jan Hus was. But according to records taken at the Council, Hus never raised his voice, he never yelled out, he never accused these religious frauds with anything. His back was straight. He stood erect. He looked them all in the eye with absolutely no fear at all. Hus was calm and serene and fully confident that although he would never see the sun rise again, he would soon see his Savior in Glory.

The man, who influenced Martin Luther, more than anyone else, was led out into an open courtyard past a burning pile of his books. In response to being chained up like a dog, Hus 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?”

At the place of execution, Hus knelt down, spread out his hands, and prayed aloud. The executioner tied his hands behind his back with ropes, and bound his neck with a chain to a stake around which wood and straw had been piled up so that it covered him to the neck. At the last moment, the imperial marshal, in the presence of the magisterial Leaders, asked Hus to recant and thus save his own life. Hus declined, saying:

“God is my witness that many of the things charged against me I never preached. In the same truth of the Gospel which I have written, taught, and preached, drawing upon the sayings and positions of the holy doctors, I am ready to die today.”⁹

But, according to eye-witnesses, the executioner had trouble lighting the hay. And some time went by as each attempt failed. Finally, a peasant woman from the crowd came up and threw a relatively small amount of brushwood on it, igniting it. Upon seeing her act, a suffering Hus then exclaimed, “*O Sancta Simplicitas!*”, which translated means: “*Holy simplicity!*” That phrase is still used today in

⁹ Schaff, David Schley, *John Huss: his life, teachings and death, after five hundred years*, (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), p. 257

the Czech Republic when commenting on a person's foolish action coming from the belief that he or she is doing something righteous.

And as the flames climbed higher and higher and began to set his flesh on fire, Jan Hus began to sing one of the **Psalms**. And as his face began to burn, he cried out, "*Christ, Son of the Living God, have Mercy on me!*" It took several minutes before the flames went out and Hus' ashes were thrown into the Rhine River so nobody could make his grave a shrine.

Now there is a Legend that has come from Hus' martyrdom that is probably *not* true. But the Legend is so prevalent that I have included it here. I have no idea if this actually happened, but it *might* have. According to the Legend, as Hus was being chained to the stake to be burned to death, he supposedly said:

“Today you will roast a lean goose, but a hundred years from now you will hear a swan sing, whom you will leave unroasted and no trap or net will catch him for you.”

... and exactly 102 years from the date of Hus' execution, an Augustinian monk, named Martin Luther, nailed 95 Thesis to the door of the Church at Wittenberg and brought about the Protestant Reformation, which has never been silenced to this day. Today, all around the world, Martin Luther is known as the "Swan of the Reformation", and those who followed Luther and were used by God to perfect Reformed Theology have become known as the "many swans", whose singing will *never* be silenced.

We need to understand, in a day when Tolerance is held in high esteem, that if Rome had the power, every single one of you would be severely punished for *believing* what you believe, and every Protestant Minister alive today would be martyred for *teaching* things contrary to Rome. And I'm not saying that to cause you to be angry at the Romans; I am simply telling you that 500 years later, with the blood of over 900,000 souls on their hands, Rome has never repented.

But I see an even *greater* Danger, one not brought about through Persecution or Martyrdom caused by angry people who hold to a false Teaching, but rather a Danger brought about through Ease and Comfort and Safety. This is a Danger that substitutes "Politics" for "Biblical Truth", that swaps "Biblical Holiness" for "Humanly

Engineered Morality”, and a Danger that teaches that financial and material Prosperity is proof of being in Right Standing with God.

My dear brothers and sisters, the Chapel that Jan Hus preached in is still there. Bethlehem Chapel at the University of Prague still exists, and the very pulpit where Hus heralded the Gospel is still there. But all it is today is a tourist attraction, a novelty of a by-gone era. Because the Preaching of Jan Hus is not heard from that Pulpit any more. His Teachings are no longer thundered from that Church. Recently, Bethlehem Chapel in Prague participated in a program where Muslims and Jews and Catholics, and weak and effeminate people, who call themselves “Protestants”, all joined hands and sang as one.

The Danger is that, after all of this bravery, all of this Courage, all of these hard fought battels, that we will *give away* what it took centuries to have. The Danger is that, even though Hus would not, that we might recant. The Danger is that we will all think that the job has been done, that the Reformation won, and that Catholics and Protestants are now all “one in Christ”. We aren’t. And while generation after generation of those enslaved by Rome are indoctrinated every year to believe the damnable heresies of that apostate religious system, silly and foolish Protestants sit back and say ridiculous things like, *“We don’t need Doctrine, all we need is to love Jesus”*; or *“Doctrine divides and we need to be in Unity”*.

And my response is, *“Yes! All who name the Name of Jesus need to be in Unity.”* But the “Unity” that we need has to be a *real* Unity, not some silly façade where we all join hands and sway back and forth with our eyes closed while we sing *“Kumbaya”*. We need to be in Unity about what we *believe*, and what we *teach*. We need to drop *all* Man-made Teachings, no matter who teaches them, or how popular they are, or how long they have been taught. We need to be in Unity about the Biblical Truth that all Church Teaching, All Doctrines, all Counseling, and all Correction must come from Scripture and Scripture ALONE. And we need to loudly and faithfully herald the rock-solid and unarguable Truth that sinners are made Righteous by Faith ALONE, and NOT through the Sacraments.

We need to be in Unity that praying to dead saints is blasphemy, even if that saint is Mary. We need to be in Unity that idol worship is always Sin, even if the idol is of a Biblical character. We need to be in Unity that Mary, as honorable as she was, was a sinner, who was saved

by Grace through Faith, just like we are. That Mary was born in Sin and was shaped in Iniquity, just like we are, and she was a *recipient* of Grace, and NOT the *dispenser* of it.

We must understand that we simply cannot arrive at any real or lasting Unity with Rome by either *ignoring* or *minimizing* why we are separated in the first place. We *dishonor* the Bible when we act as though it doesn't matter what we believe or what we teach. We *dishonor* Jesus Christ when we say that everyone who is a "good person" is going to Heaven. And we *dishonor* men like Jan Hus when we say that every person who sits on a church pew, or who is a member of a church, or who says they believe in God is saved. Hus didn't believe or teach that, and neither should we.

Dear friends, we need to remember that godly people suffered and were murdered to give us the Bible in the English language. And so, we will be hard pressed to explain to them why we didn't have the time to read it. Godly people suffered and were murdered so we could understand the Truth of Scripture. Godly people suffered and were murdered because of the Doctrine of the Trinity. Godly people suffered and were murdered because of the Doctrine of Predestination. Godly people suffered and were murdered because of the Doctrine of Sovereign Election. Godly people suffered and were murdered because they taught that Rome was wrong, and that Transubstantiation was wrong, and that we are saved by God's Grace and NOT by anything that we do for ourselves. And we will be hard pressed to explain to them why we didn't hold these Truths in high esteem.

Beloved, do not lose your Protest. Do not lose your Courage. Do not get lax, do not become weary of well-doing, especially not now, because we are on the threshold of the greatest Event in the history of the world: King Jesus will soon split the sky and come back to this earth! And riding on a white horse with Him will be Jan Hus. So, let us be found faithful on that day, and let us say with the Apostle Paul:

2 Timothy 4:7-8

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

... even so, Come Lord Jesus- Come!

Amen. Let's pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.