

A Sermon on John Wycliffe

Sermon by Rev. Minister Angela Smith of COPE for July 12th, 2020 (and beyond)

It is my sincere and heartfelt belief that John Wycliffe was the first to actually provide a complete Holy Bible in print based on mystery plays, oral histories, and some internal documents controlled by the Archbishop of Canterbury and/or Rome in the 14th century. Having studied the Wycliffe Bible, King James Bible/Version, and Revised Standard Version, it is clear to me that the King James and Revised Standard are based on Wycliffe's manuscripts/translations. I'm personally dissatisfied with the New International Version and some other translations/versions and find the King James and/or Revised Standard Version most readable though certainly modernized adaptations of Wycliffe's translations/interpretations. This is simply my perspective and understanding based on my own dedicated study of scripture. I understand views may vary on this subject and often do. As a Wycliffite I would be remiss to deny you the right to disagree. However, I may see disagreement on that point as evidence of your ignorance regarding the history of the Holy Bible. But, I'll always respect your equality to me in the eyes of GOD and the laws governing the USA as long as the US Constitution remains the foundation. So, in the least I will respect your right to disagree but may not respect your position if it is clearly ignorant or a result of willful blindness and/or vanity.

John Wycliffe sought to organize and present as literature in English the history of the development of Christianity (i.e. commitment to practice and promote Truth and Virtue and Abolition of Hypocrisy accomplished through Self-Examination and Cross-Referencing) in the language of those to be enlightened in good faith. Though the majority in 14th Century England could not read nor write, clerics and priests like John Ball could and were able to spread the good word in language everyone could reasonably understand at the time and place of communication. As a result, Priest John Ball and merchant class "peasants" (including soldiers/would-be knights) like Wat Tyler openly protested and challenged the Archbishop of Canterbury where Wycliffe did that in a more subtle academic way through his professorship at Oxford. The Archbishop of Canterbury had imprisoned Priest John Ball for questioning Canterbury's authority and on June 2nd, 1381 Wat Tyler sought to liberate Priest John Ball and the others unjustly imprisoned by the Archbishop of Canterbury for which both Priest John Ball and Wat Tyler were executed. But, that didn't stop the presses nor spreading of the word whether as Wycliffe's translation, King James Version, or any adaptation based on Wycliffe's works.

It is my firm belief that protesting church hierarchies and recognizing openly our equality, by acknowledging where we may disagree others may also disagree with us to the extent we may disagree with them and where there is true majority consensus there is a recognized social contract be it formalized or not acknowledging the same, is the Wycliffite way and I trust the first one to actually write the Holy Bible over others who rely mostly on oral histories and mystery plays (morality plays, Greek tragedies, etc...).

John Wycliffe was a professor at Oxford, priest, theologian, philosopher, translator, and in my opinion artist. And, that's the model of spreading the good word I choose to follow for my church, the Church Of Philosophical Exploration (aka COPE Ministries).

However, I'm friends with many Wat Tyler and Priest John Ball types and respect their passion but wish more understood that we won when the US Constitution was signed into law, specifically the Bill of Rights. And, so, as the first sermon following Independence Day 2020, I consider this one a callback.

To better understand this sermon, the founding fathers of COPE, and this church, please check out and/or purchase The Complete Wycliffe Bible and all books related to the 1381 revolt in England led by Priest John Ball and Wat Tyler available through the recommended reading at <https://www.cope.church/reading.htm> . There are 4 books on the 1381 revolt and one of the Wycliffe Bible editions recommended on that page.

Political Philosophical Self-Examination Questions For This Week:

1. If we were a socialist direct democracy, would voting on everything that could or would be voted on or called to be voted on leave time for anyone to do anything but vote? If so, how much time would you devote to that and how much time do you devote to public participation in government now to lead by example?
2. Do you understand that in a capitalist libertarian model, bad companies could be sued out of existence with no limits placed on damages for harms they caused in tort and run out of business or fined out of business? Do you understand that it is up to those spending money to make sure it is spent wisely and not supporting unethical or harmful businesses? Do you understand that both the above questions in #2 offer solutions for the market to both self-regulate (by consumers and investors exercising due diligence) and be regulated through the justice system where business is found to be liable in tort or individuals responsible for a business who committed crimes going to prison and/or forced to pay restitution to victims?
3. Do you now understand the debates around politics better and why some are frustrated that others don't seem to understand how government works, including the justice system and legislative purpose/process in a free country? And, does that make you feel like lack of educational opportunity is the problem or lack of study where information is available for free through public libraries and more?
4. Do you want to help? Consider donating to www.donorschoose.org today. Pick a classroom.

"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:32 KJV Willful blindness is an abomination.

COPE accepts Feedback, critical and complimentary. Learn more at <https://www.cope.church/feedback.htm> . For the sake of keeping myself and others humble, a sense of humor is welcome on all sides.

For More About COPE and the HEAL Mission, see:

<https://www.cope.church> and <http://www.heal-online.org>