

Church History Series - Part 6

by Mike Attwood

This sermon explores the historical context and key figures of the Protestant Reformation, highlighting its theological and political implications.

Duration: 50:25

Scripture: Habakkuk 2:4, Matthew 28:19, Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11, Hebrews 10:38

Topics: "Church History", "Protestant Reformation", "Faith and Conviction"

Description

Mike Attwood discusses the Protestant Reformation, emphasizing the pivotal role of Habakkuk 2:4, 'the just shall live by faith,' in inspiring Martin Luther and shaping the Reformation from AD 1500 to 1800. He highlights the cultural rebirth during the Renaissance, the rise of nation-states, and the corruption within the Roman Church that fueled the desire for reform. Attwood recounts the significant figures of the Reformation, including John Hus, Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin, and their struggles against both Catholicism and each other. He also addresses the subsequent challenges faced by the Reformation, including the Great Ejection and the rise of higher criticism, ultimately affirming that the proclamation of the gospel remains the true answer to societal issues. The sermon concludes with a call to stand firm in faith and truth, inspired by the historical courage of reformers.

Transcript

I would like, if we would, for you to turn in your Bibles to Habakkuk, Chapter 2, in Verse 4. Or Habakkuk, depending where you're from. And just read a very familiar verse. As we look at Sardis this morning, the escaping ones, the time frame we're thinking of is AD 1500 to 1800.

The Protestant Reformation, if you want to call it that. And this is the verse I'd like to read. Habakkuk 2, 4. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him, but the just shall live by his faith.

And isn't it remarkable that this obscure Old Testament book, Hidden Away in the Mine of Prophets, would so impact a man called Paul, that as he was moved by the Holy Spirit, he'd write a trilogy of commentaries on this one verse. Romans, the just. Galatians, how shall a justified man live? Shall live.

And then Hebrews, I gave the game away, by faith. Well, if you wrote Volume 1 and wrote Volume 2, there's a good possibility you wrote Volume 3, isn't there? Anyway, that's just my little thought here. But isn't it remarkable that not only would it inspire these, by the Spirit of God, these three great New Testament epistles, but it would also fan the flames of the Protestant Reformation.

The just shall live by faith. So we want to think about the Reformation this morning. We want to think about some of the things that caused it.

Something called the Renaissance. We want to think about that. But before we do, I just want to make one more mention to John Hus.

We talked about him coming under the influence of Wycliffe's teaching, being burned to the stake. And as they were getting ready to burn him, John Hus, the name Hus means goose. And he said this, You may cook my goose, but within a hundred years a swan will rise out of my ashes, and you will not stop him.

And Luther believed that he was the answer to that statement. That he was the swan that rose out of the ashes of the goose, and they wouldn't be able to stop him. That's kind of interesting, isn't it? But anyway, the cause of the Reformation.

First of all, the Renaissance. That means rebirth from Latin. And it really talks about a rebirth of culture.

After the Dark Ages, and the fall of Constantinople in 1453, we said many Greek scholars left Constantinople and brought their manuscripts with them to Rome and the West to escape the destruction of the Muslims. The manuscripts were studied with the greatest of interest. Southern Europe was so fascinated by the writings of ancient Rome and Greece that they just kind of feasted on Plato and Aristotle and all the rest of it.

But in Northern Europe, the manuscript that fascinated them was the Greek New Testament. And so there was individuals like John Collet, who lived from 1467 to 1519, who began a series of lectures on seeking to get to the literal meaning of Paul's epistles. Now prior to this, from the days really of Augustine and even before that, Origen, the way to interpret scripture was an allegorical method of interpretation.

Some of the reformed school of thought today do that with prophecy. They'll take literal understanding of a lot of the Bible, but when it comes to prophecy, they love the allegorical interpretation. But this was kind of getting back to what did, you know, the plain sense makes common sense.

Choose no other sense, or else it will be nonsense. And so there's this idea of what is the literal meaning of the Greek New Testament. John Collet's lectures began to have an impact, as people began to look at scripture at its face value.

What is it really saying? And then another guy called Erasmus, 1466 to 1536, published the Greek New Testament. And of course, the printing press is now kind of available, so it's no longer copied by hand. And so, first of all, things are cheaper, they're more readily available.

And so this Greek New Testament is now published, and men began to earnestly study it. And we just want to say this, that the studying earnestly of the Word of God, and that's why a week like this is so valuable, transforms lives, affects big outcomes, when people get serious about studying the Word of God. Secondly, as well as this renaissance, this desire to new love of learning, and rebirth of culture, there was also the rise of the nation states, and the middle classes throughout Europe, particularly in France and Spain and England.

And then people became quite nationalistic, and they began to resent Vatican interference in their national affairs. They began to resent sending their tax money to corrupt popes, who were living lavish lifestyles, and they just, a bit like Brexit, right? We don't want these crazy Europeans who are just corrupt to the

core, running our affairs in Britain. So we're, get rid of them, right? Well, that same sentiment that's driving Brexit, was driving the Reformation.

We don't want this corrupt Vatican meddling in our affairs anymore. And then the continued corruption of the Roman Church, and at this time, things like the collection of relics, had reached fever pitch. Frederick of Saxony had 5,005 relics, including some breast milk in a vial, from the Blessed Virgin Mary, supposedly.

I mean, just all kinds of bizarre things. Luther said that there were enough nails of the cross to shoe every horse in Saxony. Nails of the true cross, right? So there's this passion for relics that is, and apparently they said that if you viewed these indulgences that Frederick of Saxony had in his collection, it would reduce one's time in purgatory by nearly two million years.

But you had to pay to view them. But this is the kind of thing that's going on. And also the indulgences, an indulgence was a document that could be bought for a sum of money that would free one from the temporal penalty of sin.

The thought was, and it's still kind of the basic Catholic belief, is that Christ and the saints had achieved so much merit during their earthly lives, that excess merit was laid up in heavenly treasury and the Pope could dispense this merit to whoever he chose, or whoever was willing to pay the most money. And so one of the great centuries in Rome was that the whole basilica was funded by indulgences, the sale of indulgences. That's how they built these massive structures and the poor people could barely put bread on the table.

What self-respecting son would not be willing to sacrifice to get his mother out of purgatory? And so when these priests came around preaching about, you know, as soon as your coin hits the bottom of the can, the soul of your mother will fly out of purgatory. And they were eloquent, they were powerful preachers preaching this, they were the Benny Hinns of their generation, right? Exactly, same kind of thing. Except the money was going to Papa and he was getting richer and richer and more and more corrupt, and again, as they feasted on all the kind of pagan literature out in Rome, the popes became more and more ungodly.

And I've got a book in my library, *The Lives of the Popes*, and I want to tell you something, it's not edifying reading, it's vile. I mean, it's just defiling to even read it, but just absolute wickedness. And so this is the scene, this is the background.

And Martin Luther, he was, as a young man, he was a student and he was almost struck by lightning in a storm, and out of fear, he just made a commitment that he would give himself to the church, and so he became an Augustinian monk. Now again, Augustine is going to have a big influence on Luther. We thank God for Luther and the town he took, but he's going to bring a lot of baggage with him when he comes out of Rome, and a lot of that baggage goes back to his love for Augustine.

So remember we said Augustine's a big villain. To a lot of people, he's their hero. Calvinists, Catholics, they love, and that's why evangelicals and Catholics together happened, because Calvinists and Catholics both love Augustine.

And that kind of brings them together. So we just got to be aware of some of these things. But anyway, Luther, this Augustinian monk, he desperately was seeking peace.

Even though he was a monk and he was doing all his things, he didn't have any peace. And anyway, he sent to Rome on a pilgrimage, and part of that purpose was to help him kind of find peace, and he even kissed every step as he climbed up St. Peter's in Rome. He went to see all the various indulgences and all the rest of it.

But the thing that shocked him about Rome was how wicked and corrupt the whole thing was. And instead of actually bringing peace, it made him more troubled. And he came back disgusted by the church.

And so he got a post at Wittenberg University, and he began to study the Greek New Testament and the Book of Romans in particular. And as he studied the Book of Romans, one day he saw this amazing truth, that just shall live by faith. And Martin Luther was born again.

Through reading that wonderful scripture, light entered his soul, and he understood this teaching. And a clash with Catholicism was about to begin. And of course, the clash really began not so much even about justification by faith.

The real issue that kind of fired him up was there was a guy called Tetzel, who was a master indulgence seller who happened to be in a nearby community, and he was basically doing his thing, and Luther was so disgusted at impoverished people buying these indulgences and just the nonsense of it all. And so he basically nailed his 95 pieces to the door of the church at Wittenberg. And of course, a ring of freedom began to sound throughout the world.

And of course, in those days, you didn't post it on Facebook. The churches were the places where if you wanted to let a community know what was happening, you put it on the door there. That's where people gathered.

Everybody went to church. Mass attendance was 100%. Everybody went through those doors.

So if you wanted to get somebody's attention, that's where you put your notice. And so he nails this to the door. And of course, as he does this, it kind of was a tremendous clash because it was affecting Rome, where Rome hates to be affected most, and that's in its finances.

So they didn't like that at all. And in fact, they told him he needed to recant of what he had done. He refused, and a papal bull was sent to basically excommunicate him.

So Mr. Luther took it, and he set fire to it, and he burned it. That was quite a brave act. This is the Catholic Church at the zenith of its power, and this man is daring to challenge it.

And so he's called to this Diet of Worms, where he would stand before Charles V, the emperor, the holy Roman emperor, and give an account for his writings. And right now he's writing prolifically against the Catholic Church, and he's going to have to give an account for this kind of stuff. And so as he comes to this Diet of Worms, the first night is kind of pretty intimidating because remember, we said last night, John Post went to the council of Constance, they guaranteed his safety, and then they burned him at the stake.

Now Luther's gone, a hundred years later, and they're promising him safety. But he goes, and the first night as he stands before him, he's just a nervous wreck, and he says, can I have another 24 hours to consider these things? So he gave him a night, and he spent the night in prayer. And he sensed the spiritual battle, and of course, remember, you've got to understand this, there's a satanic opposition.

If Satan's seat was back in Smyrna, can you imagine what it would have been like? The Catholic Church has entered this time, here's one individual daring to stand against it all. And he prayed, and he stood before the council. He's asked to revoke his writings, and he said, my conscience is captive to the word of God.

Here I stand, I can do no other. God help me. And of course, that didn't go down too well, and as he was on his journey back, basically his wagon was stopped, and he was kidnapped, and he felt pretty sure it was the Roman Church that was going to kill him.

But actually it was his friend, Frederick the Wise, who had arranged to kidnap him, because he knew that's what the Catholic Church would do, and he took him and hid him away, and while he was hidden away, he used that time to translate the New Testament into German. And what a good way of using your time. And eventually, there was another diet, a diet of spires.

Now, a lot of people have heard of the diet of worms, but less people have heard of the diet of spires. And the diet of spires, basically the emperor calls all the princes to come together to denounce the writings and teachings of Luther. But there was a group of them, particularly the North German princes, who protested and said, no, we will not denounce Luther's writings.

And that's where the term Protestant comes from, from the German princes, the diet of spires, who protested this attempt by the emperor to denounce all of Luther's writings. So that's where the term Protestant comes from, the diet of spires. But the Reformation, and of course he did some other things, he married an escaped nun called Catherine von Bora.

He said there were several reasons why he did it. One of them was because it made the Pope mad. Another one was because she was, she wasn't as bad as a lot of other women he knew.

He was quite a character. In fact, if you read some of his table talk, he was quite a blunt individual and had some interesting things to say. But anyway, he was executed by Rome, several attempts were made on his life, but the Lord preserved him, and he continued to steer the Reformation in Germany.

But it wasn't just in Germany. Actually, even before Luther, a man called Ulrich Zwingli, in Switzerland, had been studying the Greek New Testament. And he had seen the truth of justification by faith.

We kind of tend to hear the side of Germany, but also Zwingli, and he was more radical than Luther. Luther, when he, he struggled with some of these things. He still felt that the communion was more than a remembrance.

He believed in consubstantiation, kind of halfway house between transubstantiation and remembrance, that Christ is not physically present, but he's kind of spiritually present in the way for it. So he has this halfway house view. But Zwingli, he sees right through all that, and he says, no, it's just a remembrance.

And so Zwingli was, again, he was a chaplain for the army. He was a priest. But he, again, through reading the Greek New Testament, he saw these things and began the Reformation in Switzerland.

And actually, in 1529, the colloquy of Marburg. Don't you just love, see, you miss out on all these great words like colloquy. You never would hear that.

I don't know what it means, but it sure sounds good, doesn't it? The colloquy of Marburg, where Luther and Zwingli come together to try and unite the Reformation between Germany and Switzerland by ironing out their differences on the law of supper. And sadly, they didn't manage to do that, and Luther was so mad at Zwingli that he refused to shake his hands and walked out. He was a stubborn German as well.

Even though he stayed, he was still a stubborn German. And so he walked out. Sorry if there's anybody from Germany back around here.

But anyway, that's what he did. He just walked out, and it was an absolute failure. After the Swiss Reformation, after Zwingli, along comes others that would follow in his footsteps.

Calvin in Geneva and William Farrell. Geneva was perceived to be the model city, and of course, Calvin was a tireless preacher. And I've got his sermons on Deuteronomy.

It's like the New York telephone directory. I mean, this guy really faithfully expounded the word of God. He was an expositor of scripture.

His commentary on 1 Corinthians 11 on head covering, outstanding. If you want to do 2 through 16, Calvin's commentary is absolutely spot on. Very, very interesting.

These individuals were, but again, Calvin was an Augustinian at heart. And remember Augustine and this whole idea of compel them to come in? If they don't come into the big church, if they don't agree with us, compel them. Use force.

So there's a guy called Michael Servetus who doesn't agree with us. See, remember as we've gone through this journey, we started out and we had the Romans, the pagan Romans, persecuting Christians. And then we had the Catholics persecuting Christians.

Now we've got something brand new. We've got true born-again Christians persecuting born-again Christians. Wow.

That's different, isn't it? It's going to get worse because there's going to be another group we're going to think about called the Anabaptists. And they're going to get it from the Catholics and they're going to get it from Luther and the Lutherans as well. And actually there'll be more Anabaptists die than ever died at the hands of the Roman Emperors.

Such is going to be the severity of this persecution believer, unbeliever. Tragic, huh? And part of it is a failure to understand dispensational theology and a listening to Augustine rather than Scripture. You see, let me just say this.

I despise Catholicism. I despise Reformed theology. Passionately.

I really do because it's so mixed up. And I'm sadly, and I just want to throw this out. Our assemblies are being greatly influenced by Reformed theology.

It's grown like a weed and it needs to be pulled out by the weeds. Seriously, it's deadly stuff. It changes personalities.

I've seen whole personalities change that embrace this stuff. And usually when you buy into this it's a package. It might start out with the gospel and this whole idea of God's sovereignty and all the rest, but it

doesn't stop there.

Pretty soon the rapture's gone, pretty soon they're amillennial, pretty soon even I've seen people even embrace infant baptism. They've gone the whole way, right? Because you want to be part, you want to be accepted in the beloved, in their beloved group, you know? And so it's very dangerous. So anyway, Calvin, John Knox goes to visit from Scotland and he says that as he visited Geneva that it was the closest thing to heaven on earth he'd ever imagined.

And he wanted to reform Scotland to be like Geneva. So what about the Reformation in England? Well, that was a very different thing. It was totally politically motivated.

Henry VIII, as we know, our friend Henry and his six wives, he was desperate for a male heir. And he's married to Anne Boleyn, she can't give him a male heir so he decides to divorce her. So he asks permission from the Pope.

The Pope refuses so he says, well, I don't need you. I'm going to declare myself to be the head of the church in England. So that's why Queen Elizabeth today is not only the sovereign of England and Great Britain and Northern Ireland but she's also the head of the church in England.

Because Henry made himself head rather than the Pope. And so as a result of that, by the way, Henry was a Catholic through and through. In fact, he wrote a defense of Catholicism against the seven, a defense of the seven sacraments against Luther's attacks on Catholicism.

Henry VIII wrote against Luther. And as a result of that, the Pope actually called him the defender of the faith because he so attacked Luther. And when Luther's writings were being smuggled into England, he would have them burned.

And by the way, even Tyndale's translation, Henry VIII was the guy who didn't want the Bible in English because he feared Luther's teaching would come through it. And so oftentimes New Testaments would be smuggled in. Tyndale, he was in Belgium translating it.

And it would come in, smuggled in, and Henry VIII would send his agents to burn them. So again, different kind of Reformation in England. Again, it's the idea of this nation-state wanting independence but not necessarily Luther was, sorry, Henry VIII was a loyal Catholic.

But nevertheless, he couldn't stop this teaching of Luther's spreading because as I said last night, a pub in Cambridge called the White Horse Inn where students from Cambridge University would come and over a pint of ale would discuss Luther's writings. And there were people there, a man called Nicholas Ridley who led a fellow called Hugh Latimer to Christ. And Ridley and Latimer would begin to preach the same message of Luther, that just shall live by faith and the need of the new birth and these men did a tremendous work.

And after Henry died, his son Edward, Edward was called the young Josiah. He was definitely a born-again man and he would love to have Latimer come and preach in the royal court and unfold the teachings of scripture. But sadly, he didn't live very long.

He died as a young man. Young Josiah didn't last too long. And then Elizabeth came to the throne.

Elizabeth I. And Elizabeth I was good. But maybe I'm jumping a little bit ahead of the game because before Elizabeth came Mary, Bloody Mary. And Bloody Mary was a Catholic, die-hard Catholic and she decided that she was going to destroy the Reformation in England.

And so she had her Inquisition, Torture, Latimer, Ridley and Thomas Cramner. Thomas Cramner was the Archbishop of Canterbury. He wrote the Book of Common Prayer and the 39 Articles of the Church in England.

But anyway, under torture some interesting things happened. Ridley and Latimer stood firm. They were burned at the stake in Oxford.

I've actually been to the place. There's a memorial in Oxford to the Oxford martyrs, Latimer, Ridley and Cramner. And they were tied together at the stake and Latimer said and he recorded Take heart Mr Ridley such a candle will be lit today in England would never be put out.

And he also said Lord open the King of England's eyes. So interesting. But Thomas Cramner under torture had recanted of his views.

And by the way the big issue that was at stake here was whether Christ was physically present in the wafer or not. That was the big issue. And he recounted and said yes Christ was physically present under torture.

And so the day they said we know you'll be set free you'll be at liberty of course you'll do anything but number like with John they're not going to keep their word. So they were going to take him to the stake anyway. So they asked him to give his kind of a sermon of his recantation and again in the church he offered that big platform where he stood and he stood up and he says I recant of my recantation.

Christ is not present and anyway as they took him to the stake he broke free of the group ran and they already had the flames lit and he put his hand where he signed the recantation he put the hand directly in the flames and he said this must burn first because with this I deny my Lord. These were the English masters and yet again the Reformation spread Elizabeth was more tolerant although we'll see later she didn't like division in the church because again these rulers if they see division they're concerned because they don't want division in the country and there's still a Catholic party in the Anglican church and there's still a party in the Anglican church that are evangelical and there's even a kind of radical party called the Puritans who feel like the Reformation hasn't gone far enough okay so there's a lot of tension in the church we'll think about that in a moment but just I want to mention Reformation in other places John Knox in Scotland and again he was a man of prayer we heard a good exaltation from Mr.

McIntosh this morning in prayer but the Queen said that she feared John Knox's prayers more than any army isn't that amazing making monarchs tremble because of his prayers and so he of course having been to Geneva calling it the most perfect school of Christ on earth he wanted to bring the Presbyterian model into England or into Scotland and then of course the Reformation in Holland last place in Europe to embrace the Reformation and so now most of Northern Europe is reformed is Protestant and yet the Reformation there's a lot of good things happening but as we said it didn't go far enough and this idea of not going far enough is going to cause problems and so I just want to mention some of the groups during this time that felt that things had not gone far enough they felt like there was

more to be reformed in the church and so there's still a lot of conflict there was a war going on between in Germany between the Catholics princes and the Protestant princes and they came to a peace agreement in 1648 the peace of Westphalia and it kind of ended persecution and there was this kind of tolerance between Lutheran and Catholic and as a result of that Lutheranism settled down and really became dead you have a name that you live but you're dead formality set in after the fires of persecution died down it just became routine ritual business as usual and so Lutheranism became really just kind of a spent force in England there was the Puritans the Queen Elizabeth had written this act of uniformity she had parliament right in 1662 which basically was to say that every church in

England should be uniform in its practice and she's trying to keep the Catholic wing and the Protestant wing and the Puritan wing happy so she's trying to come up with something that would make everybody happy something like today right when everybody would be happy right so because the Puritans weren't happy and so in 1662 if you refuse to enact what it said in the act of uniformity which means you have to use the book of common prayer ministers have to wear certain dresses or whatever they wear you know kind of so there's certain things that have got to be done the Puritans won't do it so in 1662 the great ejection 2000 evangelical men are kicked out of the church in England now for these individuals their salary was paid by the state so now they many of them had big families in those

days right so all of a sudden you have a family to feed and you have no income not only that their church buildings where their congregations were confiscated so they had no place to meet and then they lived in the manse which was owned by the church and they're kicked out on the street so you've got this massive time over great ejection and all these people they became known as the non-conformist because they wouldn't sign the act of uniformity and some of these non-conformist conformists you would know John Bunyan Pilgrim's Progress guy remember see he he's a Baptist he believed in baptism by immersion he wasn't an all-day minister but he was a gospel preacher and they kept arresting him every time he was preaching he didn't have a license so they stick him in prison and they say if you

stop preaching we'll let you go he said I'm not going to preach so eventually they let him go because they got to feed him and all the rest of him so they finally let him go and they go back to preaching and put him back in again and that's why he wrote conclusion to evolution and then German higher criticism the universities men like Schlierer, Macker, Wellhausen they began to look at the Old Testament and they began to treat it like any other piece of literature and they look at style and they say well when we look at the Pentateuch because the differences in styles we think there were four authors of the Pentateuch not Moses there's J, E, D and P then they began to do the same with the New Testament as well and so the Word of God and especially the supernatural element was dismissed

and so and by the way higher criticism found its way into most seminaries in the world and it's still in most seminaries in the world, even evangelical seminaries.

What comes out of a seminary might not be a good thing.

In fact can I just say this ministerial education can never make a man of God. Only God can make a man of God. But these seminaries divide the Word of God and criticize the Word of God and question the Word of God and so all of a sudden God's not necessary and God's Word is just like any other book.

It's not this inspired supernatural document and then you've got the age of revolution, 1776. These rebellious Americans rebelling against the king when the scripture is so clear, honor the king. I love to do this, I'm an Englishman so I get a kick out of doing this.

But 1789 inspired by the success of the American revolution, the French revolution, storming of the Bastille. Notre Dame, there was a statue of the Virgin Mary and they knocked it down and put a statue of a whore there instead. And all of a sudden virtue is being replaced by reason.

Interesting isn't it? And then on top of that there's the industrial revolution, urbanization, masses flocking in from a formal kind of agricultural way of life into the factories and into the cities and the squalor and all the rest of it. And so kind of the whole of society is just in upheaval and then you've got the industrial revolution with the class divisions that became evident and capitalism and Karl Marx and his reaction with communism and religion being considered to be the opium of the masses. And so in the midst of all this, and we're just setting the scene, you think well what's the answer? I mean you talk about bleakness, God is kind of marginalized.

How does society even believe that? And you know what's interesting? When we get to tonight's session, we're going to look at the Wesleyan revival and then we're going to look at the revivals in the 1800s as well. And one thing we're going to learn is that apologetics did nothing to stem the tide of iniquity. Now today, apologetics is a big thing.

I doubt the value of apologetics. What changed the world in the 1700s and the 1800s was the proclamation of the gospel in holy spirit, power and simplicity. And that changed the landscape.

Now I'm not saying don't ever read an apologetic book. But what I'm saying is that the answer is the gospel. It always has been.

And that's the only thing that can make a nation righteous. No valve box can do it. Only the gospel of Jesus Christ can change humanity.

And God would, in his mercy, send a massive revival in the 1700s and then followed up with subsequent revivals in the 1800s and the movement you and I kind of resonate with, this return to New Testament Christianity, was a movement born in revival. We heard about open air preaching. Well, 1859, one of the guys that preached in the open air was a fella called C.H. Macintosh.

These men were part of the 1859 revival. Right in the middle of it. Now of course 1826 is when they got exiled to New Testament principles, but they're still very, very active in gospel work.

And it's going to really have an impact on the world in which they live. So again, just by way of encouragement to us, things were really bleak after the Reformation. Fires had died down.

Deadness had set in. God is marginalized in culture. But God began to show the world, I'm still the living God.

I'm still on the throne. And I know, and I use, yielded lives to preach my old message to change the world. Father, we're so grateful for these histories.

We do give you thanks for the individuals that we've thought about, like Luther. With all their imperfections, we can't take away from the massive stand that he took. And we're thankful for the courage you gave him, and for the conviction to stand on scripture.

And so we're very grateful for that. We're thankful for men in the Great Ejection, who would willingly lose their livelihood, their homes, their income, because they refused to compromise truth. Lord, these men,

well, they've been a cloud of witnesses to us.

And we just want to ask that you would make us men of conviction now, that we would stand for truth, in our generation, whatever the cost. Help us not to be those that are swept with the currents and fads of the age, but are rooted into the eternal word of God, and the truths of God. And we just stand there.

Thank you, Father, for the power of the word, that this little verse, back in Habakkuk, could have such an impact on a man called Paul. Or Saul of Tarsus. On a man called Luther.

And on every one of our lives. Oh, how we thank you for the truth of the just shall live by faith. In the name of the Lord Jesus, we give thanks.

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