

Lecture 27- Lux Lucet In Tenebris: The Waldensians

At Lincoln Cathedral there is a beautiful painted window, which was made by an apprentice out of the pieces of glass which had been restored by his master. It is far superior to every other in the church... Sir Walter Scott, in the same manner, has used those fragments of truths which historians have scornfully thrown behind them in a manner which may well excite their envy. He has constructed out of their gleanings works which, even considered as histories, are scarcely less valuable than theirs.” (T. B. Macaulay)

*Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
Matthew 5:10*

Assigned Reading

The Story of Christianity—No reading assignment for this lecture

Key Terms

Peter Waldo

Objectives

- Identify the beliefs of the Waldensians

Class Prayer

*“Our Father, who art in heaven;
Hallowed be Thy name.
Thy kingdom come.
Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread,
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation,
But deliver us from evil;
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, for ever. Amen.”*
The Lord’s Prayer

Lux Lucet In Tenebris: The Waldensians**I. The First Reformation**

- A. The twelfth century
- B. The Waldensians
 1. “The Poor Men of Lyons”
 2. Persecution

II. Theology and Practice

- A. Poverty

“These people have no fixed abodes. Two by two they go about barefoot, clad in wool, having nothing, holding all things in common, naked following the naked Christ.” (Roman Catholic Walther Map)
- B. Scripture

“*The Vaudois Teacher*” by John Greenleaf Whittier
- C. Lay preaching
- D. Sacraments
- E. Church

III. Later History of the Waldensians

- A. Joined the Protestant (Reformed) movement around 1532
- B. Endured persecution until 1848

On the Late Massacre in Piedmont

*“Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughtered saints, whose bones
Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold;
Even them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worshiped stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that rolled
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To heaven. Their martyred blood and ashes sow
O’er all the Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundredfold, who having learnt thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.”*

John Milton (1655)

- C. The Waldensian Church today

Question for Consideration

What is the theology of the Waldensians?

For Further Study

Read the selections “From the Archives” about the Waldensians. In the first selection notice the remarkable discussion about the Lord’s Supper. What is the main point of the second selection? What do you think are the most significant Waldensian doctrines as presented in “The Noble Lesson?” The fourth selection reveals more about Waldensian teaching from the biased and somewhat exaggerated account of an enemy. What is your assessment of the Confession of Chanforan? Read the moving letter of the Waldensian pastor condemned to die in Rome.