The Reformers Before the Reformation. The Fifteenth Century. John Huss and the Councils of Constance

John Huss was a Czech priest who lived during the fifteenth century. He was known for his radical beliefs and his challenge to the authority of the Church. Huss was a strong advocate for the rights of the common people and the Church’s return to its early roots. He believed in the freedom of the individual to interpret the scriptures and reject the doctrine of transubstantiation. This belief was not well-received by the Catholic Church, and Huss was eventually burned at the stake in 1415.

Wycliffe, on the other hand, was a Welshman who lived during the early fourteenth century. He was a strong critic of the Church’s corruption and its wealth. Wycliffe believed that the Church should follow the teachings of Jesus and live a simple life. He advocated for the church to return to its apostolic traditions, and he was the first to use the phrase “priesthood of all believers.”

Wycliffe and Huss were both important figures in the development of Protestantism. Their ideas influenced the Reformation and shaped the beliefs of later reformers. However, their efforts were not without opposition. The Church viewed them as a threat and placed a price on their heads. In the end, their ideas were too radical for the established order, and their lives were cut short.

Wycliffe and Huss were not the only reformers who challenged the authority of the Church. Many others followed in their footsteps, each with their own unique ideas and approaches. The Reformation was a complex and multifaceted movement, and the ideas of Wycliffe and Huss played a crucial role in its development.