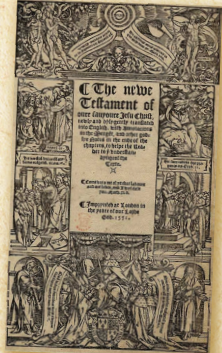


The Catholic church persuaded Henry VIII to issue a proclamation condemning Tyndale, and they plotted to kill him. He had already suffered immensely, being on the run and on one occasion losing all his manuscripts in a storm in the English Channel.

In the spring of 1535, Henry Phillips from Dorset, a man in his twenties whom Tyndale had befriended and helped, exploited and betrayed him. Bound, Tyndale was taken to Vilvoorde Castle, six miles north of Brussels, and kept in a cold damp cell for 501 days before being tried as a 'heretic', condemned, strangled and burnt. While he was a prisoner, he had brought his jailor and his daughter, as well as many of his household, to faith in Christ. Others in the prison testified that Tyndale was a true Christian.

Tyndale's final words were, 'Lord, open the King of England's eyes.' He was martyred on 6 October 1536.

Within four years, that prayer was answered. Miles Coverdale, from York, continued Tyndale's work on the Old Testament, so that in 1537 the complete Bible, translated directly from the original languages, was published for the first time in English, and the King ordered that a copy of the Bible should be in every church. People would go throughout daylight hours and stand reading until their voice gave out, then another would take their place and carry on reading.



By 1539 the King had received so many complaints that the people gathering around the Bible were reading it too loudly that he ordered them to

refrain from reading the Bible during divine services.

Though 500 years old, Tyndale's translation is remarkably easy to understand. The Bible is God's message to humanity. It tells us who God is, and who we are; it explains what God has done for us, and what He wants us to do. It reveals the God who made us and loves us, despite our rebellion, and how He sent His Son to earth to 'seek and to save those who are lost'.

All the Bible is about is Jesus: it looks forward to His coming, then describes His life, death and resurrection, and tells us how He will return to wind up the affairs of this world.

Read it for yourself, and let God 'introduce' Himself to you!

Image credit: Title page of the Bible printed in 1551, depicting Henry VIII giving a copy to all his Bishops. picryl.com, Public Domain.



To find out more about Jesus Christ please visit:  
**tell-me-more.org**

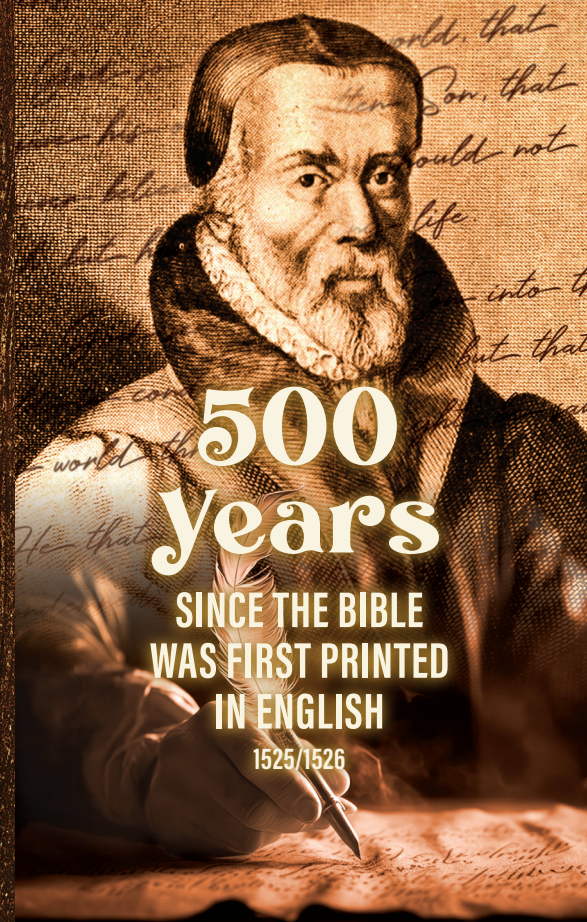
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## William Tyndale



# 500 years

**SINCE THE BIBLE  
WAS FIRST PRINTED  
IN ENGLISH**

1525/1526

**The Bible, the world's bestseller, has influenced our nation for good more than any other book.**

**To its teachings we owe our freedoms and the basis for good morals.**

The year 2025 marks the 500th anniversary of the first pages of the Bible being printed in English; 2026 is the 500th anniversary of a full printed New Testament available in England and Scotland for the first time.

Although an illegal English version had existed since 1382, these hand-copied books were rare, and William Tyndale was the first to translate the Bible from the original Hebrew and Greek into the language of the people.

Tyndale was born about 1494, most likely in Slimbridge, Gloucestershire. He studied at both Oxford and Cambridge universities. It was while he was a student that he came to a clear faith in Jesus, trusting Him to be his Lord and Saviour. William then worked as a tutor to a wealthy family in Gloucestershire.

In discussion with a Roman Catholic theologian, Tyndale was shocked to hear him say, "We

were better to be without God's laws than the pope's!"

Tyndale replied,

*'I defy the Pope and all his laws. If God spare my life, ere many years, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough to know more of the Scriptures than thou dost.'*

The rest of his life was devoted to doing just that. Arriving in London, Tyndale began his work of translating the Bible into English despite being opposed by the Bishop, who would later order all Tyndale's New Testaments to be burned.

The pomp, pride and ignorance of the clergy greatly distressed Tyndale. The Bible and church services were in Latin and not understood by most people. They were superstitious, living in fear of the priests, many of whom spent their energy preventing people knowing what God had said in the Bible.



Most people felt they had to earn favour with God by good behaviour and penance. But Tyndale knew that the Bible teaches forgiveness for sin is a free gift open to all who will receive God's offer of salvation. The Bible teaches that Jesus came from heaven to earth, that in His death on the cross He paid the penalty of sin; and that in rising from the dead, He offers new, eternal life to all who put their trust in Him.

Finding that King Henry VIII and the church were firmly set against an English version of the Bible, Tyndale left for Germany and then the Netherlands. Poverty, persecution and constant danger were his lot. But how to best help

his countrymen understand the Bible, God's Word to all men and women, was his concern. Tyndale felt moved by God to translate and print the Bible in his mother tongue for the benefit of everyone back home.

The New Testament translation was completed in 1525. Initial attempts to print it were disrupted and Tyndale had to flee to another city where the work began again. In 1526 full New Testaments began to be smuggled in bales of straw into England and Scotland. Of the 3,000 printed copies, only two survive in their entirety today.

The Scripture had tremendous effect, bringing many to faith in God. They read that salvation was not earned by their own goodness, or through the Catholic church, but given because of all that Jesus had accomplished for them by His death and resurrection.