Reformation Day 2026
500th anniversary of William Tyndale's English New Testament

Scope of the talk

1. Why should we as church gather to commemorate the event known in history as The Protestant Reformation and specifically the 500th anniversary of the printing of the first English New Testament based on the original Greek?

2. The situation in Europe and England leading up to Tyndale and his work.

3. William Tyndale – The apostle of England – His life and work
   - Early Life
   - Education
   - His Work/impact
   - Conclusion

4. Questions/Comments

Scripture Reading

35 Women received their dead raised to life again: and others were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection:

36 and others had trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

37 they were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented;

38 (of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.

39 And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise:

40 God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect.

Why Bother?

Perhaps you have heard of the historical events which began to take place beginning in the early 1500s known as the Protestant Reformation. Perhaps you have heard the word Protestant before and understand it to just describe a different form of Christianity than Roman Catholicism or Greek Orthodoxy. Perhaps you even believe, as many in the "evangelical church" does today, that we ought to abandoned this word Protestant and all that it originally meant, as nothing but a word that causes division and strife within "the church". These men say we ought to lay it down, and join hand in hand with these other "Christian communions" to battle the secular forces that are today assailing the church from the outside.

Charles Colson, one of the "Protestant" organizers and writers of the 1994 document called *Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium* (ECT), has stated.

"The pain and distrust between Catholics and Protestants goes *[sic]* back centuries. The church has often been plagued by wars within her walls, crippling her in her battle against the encroaching armies of secularism. But at root, those who are called of God, whether Catholic or Protestant, are part of the same Body. What they share is a belief in the basics: the virgin birth, the deity of Christ, His bodily resurrection, His imminent return, and the authority of his infallible Word. They also share the same mission: presenting Christ as Savior and Lord to a needy world.... It's high time that all of us who are Christians come together regardless of the differences in our confessions and our traditions and make common cause to bring Christian values to bear in our society. When the barbarians are scaling the walls, there is no time for petty quarreling in the camp."
As Quoted by John Robbins in Bleating Wolves - The Meaning of Evangelicals and Catholics Together
www.trinityfoundation.org

Notice Colson wants us to lay aside our confessions, and by implication our Bibles, and join with Catholics in bringing Christian values to bear on society. The big issue for him is changing society. He want us to lay aside our faith and join together to stop the secularist. Interestingly if you study each point of doctrine named by him as "the basics" you will find significant differences between historic Biblical Protestant belief and Roman Catholic belief.

The evangelical signers and or endorsers of this document (ECT) included J. I. Packer of Regent College, Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ, Mark Noll of Wheaton College, and Pat Robertson of the 700 Club. All of these men and more, by endorsing or signing such documents, have implicitly denied what it means to be Protestant.

Others so called "evangelicals" on the charismatic side have called for an end of the Reformation. In a video on Youtube from 2014 false prosperity teacher Kenneth Copeland held a ministers conference and declared that the "miracle of unity" has begun. Pope

Francis is then featured via video call, calling for the same miracle of unity between Protestants and Catholics. Copeland then responds to the Pope saying that all the minsters gathered there represent tens of thousands of people that love you, he goes on and says "we receive your blessing and we bless you. He then makes the statement that "heaven is thrilled over this." The scene is truly chilling. In another video found on Youtube (2017) Copeland recites the Catholic/Luthern accord of 1999 citing how it resolves the differences between Catholics and Protestants over the doctrine of Justification. He then makes the comment that "the protest is over."

What about in Reformed churches? Surely they have stood firm in the face of the temptation to return to "Mother church." Unfortunately there has been a heretical teaching ravaging the Reformed churches for some years now called "The Federal Vision."

John M Otis in his book, Danger in the Camp in which he refutes their false teaching describes the Federal Vision teaching as follows:

"Entrance into Gods Covenant is objective via water baptism. There is no distinction between the visible church and the invisible church. The term "elect" applies corporately to those who are objectively in the covenant. Water baptism is the distinguishing mark of those who constitute the elect of God. Our water baptism be it infant or adult baptism constitutes true union with Christ, meaning that we have all the saving graces at our baptism. Since we are in genuine union with Christ at our baptism and since apostasy is a real warning in Scripture, those who renounce the Faith and or who live rebellious lives with regard to Gods commandments can lose their salvation. This means that one loses his initial Justification. There is a final Justification that must be maintained by faithful obedience to Gods Law throughout ones lifetime. Justification is seen in terms of obedient faith or as faithfulness. Good works are not merely the fruit or evidence of saving faith; it is seen as the essence of faith. We are Justified by covenant faithfulness and, justification is progressive in the sense that we are declared justified on the day of judgment aslong as we did not apostatize in our lifetime. The covenant of works is non-existent. Jesus' active obedience or his righteous keeping of the Law has nothing to do with the basis of our Justification on the final day of judgment. Christs obedience to the Law enabled Him to be the worthy sinless sacrifice, giving him a right standing before God the Father so that union with Christ in his resurrected and glorified life is what is credited to us, not his meritorious works on our behalf."

Anyone familiar with Roman Catholic theology will see how similar the Federal Vision theology is to Rome.

So then we must ask what is Protestantism and what does it mean to be a Protestant? J.A Wylie writing in the mid 1800s in his three volume magnum opus "The History of Protestantism" describes it this way:

the History of Protestantism is the record of one of the grandest dramas of all time. It is true, no doubt, that Protestantism, strictly viewed, is simply a principle. It is not a policy. It is not an empire, having its fleets and armies, its officers and tribunals, wherewith to extend its dominion and make its authority be obeyed. It is not even a Church with its hierarchies, and synods and edicts; it is simply a principle. But it is the greatest of all principles. It is a creative power. Its plastic influence is all-embracing. It penetrates into the heart and renews the individual. It goes down to the depths and, by its omnipotent but noiseless energy, vivifies and regenerates society. It thus becomes the creator of all that is true, and lovely, and great; the founder of free kingdoms, and the mother of pure churches.

Whence came this principle? The name Protestantism is very recent: the thing itself is very ancient. The term Protestantism is scarcely older than 350 years. It dates from the protest which the Lutheran princes gave in at the Diet of Spires in 1529. Restricted to its historical signification, Protestantism is purely negative. It only defines the attitude taken up, at a great historical era, by one party in Christendom with reference to another party. But had this been all, Protestantism would have had no history. Had it been purely negative, it would have begun and ended with the men who assembled at the German town in the year already specified. The new world that has come out of it is the proof that at the bottom of this protest was a great principle which it has pleased Providence to fertilize, and make the seed of those grand, beneficent, and enduring achievements which have made the past three centuries in many respects the most eventful and wonderful in history. The men who handed in this protest did not wish to create a mere void. If they disowned the creed and threw off the yoke of Rome, it was that they might plant a purer faith and restore the government of a higher Law. They replaced the authority of the Infallibility with the authority of the Word of God. The long and dismal obscuration of centuries they dispelled, that the twin stars of liberty and knowledge might shine forth, and that, conscience being unbound, the intellect might awake from its deep sleep, and human society, renewing its youth, might, after its halt of a thousand years, resume its march towards its high goal.

We repeat the question — Whence came this principle? And we ask our readers to mark well the answer, for it is the key-note to the whole of our vast subject, and places us, at the very outset, at the springs of that long narration on which we are now entering.

Protestantism is a principle which has its origin outside human society: it is a Divine graft on the intellectual and moral nature of man, whereby new vitalities and forces are introduced into it, and the human stem yields henceforth a nobler fruit. It is the descent of a heaven-born influence which allies itself with all the instincts and powers of the individual, with all the laws and cravings of society, and which, quickening both the individual and the social being into a new life, and directing their efforts to nobler objects, permits the highest development of which humanity is capable, and the fullest possible accomplishment of all its grand ends. In a word, Protestantism is revived Christianity.

I would call your attention to where Wylie, talking of the German princes who submitted a protest to the Diet of Spires in 1529, says: **They replaced the authority of the Infallibility with the authority of the Word of God.** The German princes refused to submit themselves to the “Infallibility” referring to the pretended infallibility of the Roman Papacy in all matters of faith and practice, but instead they stood upon the Word of God as revealed in the 66 books of the Old and New Testaments as their final authority. This my friends is that principle which Wylie says is a heaven born gift, The Word of God and the reviving effects it brings when blessed to individuals by the power of God the Holy Spirit. Wylie calls this Protestantism “revived Christianity”, that is Christianity based on the Bible, which alone is true Christianity.

Historically then Protestants are those people that believe in the authority of Scripture alone, and on that basis believe that salvation from sin is by Gods Grace alone, through Faith alone, in Christ alone, and all to the glory of God alone.

Again I say.

Scripture Alone: Not the Scripture plus church traditions or new revelations.
Grace Alone: Not Grace plus the intercession and merits of the "saints" or our own merit
Faith Alone: Not Faith plus good works.
Christ Alone: Not Christ plus the sacraments of the church
To the Glory of God Alone: That no man may boast.

These are the five Sola's of the Reformation. But the first, Scripture Alone, is the most important for it is the first principle of Christianity and from which the other truths are derived.

If we wanted to give a very short explanation of the events of the 16th century called the Reformation we might describe it this way: **It was nothing less then the unleashing of the Word of God upon the nations of Europe.** For, for over a thousand years the Roman church had hid the truths of the scripture from the common man, having concealed it in a foreign language and substituted herself into the place of the infallible Word of God, and said to the nations "listen to me and thou shalt live." Oh what deception of Satan! For the scripture says that they which turn aside to the prostitutes house are on the pathway to Hell, going down to the chambers of death (Pro 7:27).

Therefore my fellow believer if you own a Bible and if you love the Word of God. If it has become to you sweeter then the honeycomb, and more precious to you then all the gold in the world, if in its pages you find sweet communion with the one who shed his blood for your soul on that cruel cross 2000 years ago, if you understand and are assured by its doctrines that the one who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ is forgiven of all his sin and is clothed in the perfect righteousness of Christ, if you know from its pages that you are an adopted child of God, then consider the fact that if it was not for God raising up men who were willing to risk their lives for the word of God during the time of the Reformation, this knowledge would still be hid from you, and you would be travelling the broad road that leadeth unto destruction. But praise be to God that the narrow way that leadeth unto life has been opened to us through His Holy Word. Despite all the malice of Satan we still have the Holy Scriptures readily available to us in the western world today. Many have given their lives to preserve this blessing for us. Whenever you open your Bible remember that it is a book that has come to you through much blood, a thousand years of the harlot of Rome being drunk with the blood of the saints!

Therefore my friends it is important for us to remember and to consider the great men of God of the past who have hazarded their lives for the Word of God to be made available to us. Lets us not turn our backs on them as many of the so called Protestants in the evangelical churches are doing today. Let us know and understand our Protestant history which goes back farther then the Reformation itself. Those men that have returned to co-

operation with Rome have rejected the Reformation and all it stood for, and they need to be called to repentance. God forbid that we should do the same!

So then these are a few reasons why we should bother. This year is a special year indeed for it marks the 500th anniversary of the printing and distribution of William Tyndale's 1526 English New Testament. Tyndale's New Testament was the first to be translated from the original Greek. As we shall see Tyndale's zeal for the translation and distribution of the Word of God in the English language was unmatched by any English speaker who has ever lived. There was no height he would not climb nor depth he would not go to get the scriptures into the hands of the English Plow boy. Although he is very little known today, even among Christians, his influence is still felt.

In the Scriptures, The LORD repeatedly commanded the nation of Israel to remember their deliverance from the bondage that they suffered in Egypt.

"And remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and *that* the Lord thy God brought thee out thence through a mighty hand and by a stretched out arm: " Deuteronomy 5:15

In the New Testament Christ instituted the Lords Supper as an ordinance of remembrance.

"And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me." Luke 22:19

Just as we are not to forget our Lords sacrifice for our sin and our subsequent deliverance from the guilt and bondage of sin by Him, so let us not forget our Lords mighty acts in History, preserving his Word and his true church through the onslaught of the enemy, and causing his people to overcome.

But let us also tread carefully as we gather to remember those believers who have gone before us that it turn not into a superstitious thing. Lets us not fall into the error of the early church who started worshipping the martyrs. Also let us not fall into the error of distinguishing days, for in the New covenant there are no distinctions of days, except the Lords Days for the public worship of the church. Therefore a Reformation day gathering or celebration should never be made a binding observance for the church.

Paul Says in Gal 4:9-11

..... how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? **10** Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. **11** I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.

But Paul also says in Rom 14:5-6

5 One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. **6** He that regardeth the day, regardeth *it* unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard *it*.

So if you are here today may you regard this day unto the Lord and may your mind be fully persuaded and may it be set on his glorious and mighty work in the history of his church. And may you say with Paul

Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, *be* honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen. 1Tim 1:17

The Situation

At the beginning of the book of Acts the risen Lord said to his disciples:

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth." Acts 1:8

Throughout the rest of the book of Acts we see the fulfillment of this verse. The apostles by the power of the Holy Spirit upon them begin to preach boldly about the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the significance of these events, namely that "whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sin: Acts 10:43. Eventually the Jewish Persecutor Saul of Tarsus would be wonderfully converted on the road to Damascus. The Lord would commission him and others to take the gospel to the Gentile world. Through their bold proclamation that Jesus was the fulfillment of the promises of the Old Testament and that those who believe on Him would receive the forgiveness of sins, and Justification before God, many dispersed Jews and Gentiles believed and were then formed into local churches.

After the last Apostle died the church continued to expand throughout the Roman empire despite many furious persecutions conducted against them by many Roman emperors. Many believers had to seal their testimony with their blood.

Historian J.A Wylie Writes:
The spread of Christianity during the first three centuries was rapid and extensive. The main causes that contributed to this were the translation of the Scriptures into the languages of the Roman world, the fidelity and zeal of the preachers of the Gospel, and the heroic deaths of the martyrs. "The History of Protestantism Chapter 1"

In 313 Ad Emperor Constantine the Great came to power. He professed himself to be a Christian and signed the Edict of Milan which put a stop to the persecution of the Christians which had been started by Emperor Diocletian some 10 years earlier. Although this seemed like a good thing for the visible church it turned out to be its downfall, Constantine began to remodel the church after the Roman government. Eventually "Catholic Christianity" would become the state religion with the Proclamation of the Edict of Thessalonica in 380Ad, which states that any form of Christianity that did not conform to that professed by the Roman Pontiff Damasus and by Peter Bishop of Alexandria would be branded with the name of heresy, and punished by the state.

Wylie States:

From the fourth century the corruptions of the Christian Church continued to make marked and rapid progress. The Bible began to be hidden from the people. And in proportion as the light, which is the surest guarantee of liberty, was withdrawn, the clergy usurped authority over the members of the Church. The canons of councils were put in the room of the one infallible Rule of Faith; and thus the first stone was laid in the foundations of "Babylon, that great city, that made all nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." The ministers of Christ began to affect titles of dignity, and to extend their authority and jurisdiction to temporal matters.
The History of Protestantism, Chapter 2

Wylie also states:

Already in the fourth century, we find images introduced into the churches, the bones of martyrs hawked about as relics, the tombs of saints become the resort of pilgrams, and monks and hermits swarming in the various countries. We find the pagan festivals, slightly disguised, adopted into Christian worship; the Lords supper dispensed at funerals; the not improbable origin of masses; and the churches filled with the blaze of lamps and tapers, the smoke of incense, the perfume of flowers, and the goodly show of gorgeous robes, crosiers, mitres, and gold and silver vases; reminding one of the not so unsimilar spectacles which might be witnessed in pagan temples."
The History of the Papacy Chapter 2 pg25

Jerome made a new translation of the Scriptures into Latin at the beginning of the 5th century which came to be known as the Vulgate. Eventually, as Romes power grew over the churches throughout Europe Latin would be the only language used for divine services and the Vulgate the only Bible aloud to be read, despite the fact that in most nations Latin was not understood.

I believe that around this time true believers separated themselves from the apostasy of Rome and for the most part went into hiding with their bibles and their apostolic faith. These sects repeatably appear throughout the middle ages and were known as Waldenses, Albigenses, Cathars, Paulicians and multiple other names. They often debated with the Catholic clergy and boldly testified to the sufficiency of Scripture and the apostasy of Rome.

William Jones Writing in his History of the Christian Church relates what a monk named Egbert had to say about some the descendants of these believers in the 12th century. Jones writes:

"We have some additional information concerning these people, given us by Egbert, a monk, and afterwards abbot of Schonauge, who tells us that he had often disputed with these heretics, and that he had learned still more of their opinions from those who had through the force of torments and the threat of being burned, renounced their communion. He says, "they are commonly called Cathari, [Puritans] a sort of people very pernicious to the catholic faith, which, like moths, they corrupt and destroy." He adds, that they were divided into several sects, and maintained their opinions by the authority of scripture. He take particular notice of their denying the utility of baptism to infants, which, say they through their incapacity, avails nothing to their salvation; insisting that baptism ought to be deferred till they come to years of discretion, and that even then those only should be baptized who make a profession of faith, and desire it. "They are armed," says he, "with the words of the holy scripture which in any way seem to favor their sentiments, and with those they know how to defend their errors, and to oppose the catholic truth; though in reality they are wholly ignorant of the true meaning couched in those words, and which cannot be discovered without great judgment. They are increased to great multitudes throughout all countries, to the great danger of the church — for their words eat like a canker, and, like a flying leprosy, runs every way, infecting the precious members of Christ. These, in our Germany we call Cathari; in Flanders they call them Piphles; in French, Tisserands, from the art of weaving, because numbers of them are of that occupation."

Jones Continues
"Thus by comparing together these several fragments of information, we may acquire some distinct notion of these Cathari. They were a plain, unassuming, harmless, and industrious race of Christians, patiently bearing the cross after Christ, and both in their doctrine and manners condemning the whole system of idolatry and superstition which reigned in the church of Rome, placing true religion in the faith, hope, and obedience of the gospel, maintaining a supreme regard to the authority of God, in his word, and regulating their sentiments and practices by that divine standard"
William Jones "History of the Christian Church, Chapter 4: Sketches of the Christian Church from Claude of Turin to Peter Waldo A.D 843-1160"

Jones adds that these people also rejected purgatory and the mass and said that praying for the dead is useless. Throughout the 12th century these people were exposed to severe persecution. As a result the Bible in the vernacular languages was banned and the inquisition was eventually set up in the earlier 1200's and become the terror of Europe for approximately 600 years.

In England, during the 1300s, another reform movement started as a result of the teachings of John Wycliffe. Wycliffe translated the scriptures into English from the Latin and would send out preachers who were know as Lollards to preach the gospel. Because of this movement, the archbishop of Canterbury Thomas Arundel issued the Oxford Constitutions which stated:

"Therefore we enact and ordain that no one henceforth do by his own authority translate any text of Holy Scripture into the English tongue or any other by way of book, pamphlet, or treatise.... Let him that do contrary be punished in the same manner as a supporter of heresy and error"

As a result of this many Lollards were burned at the stake for their faith, right up until the reign of Henry the VIII in the early 1500s. This was the situation that William Tyndale was born into in England near the end of the 15th century.

William Tyndale:

William Tyndale was most likely born in a small village near Dursley, in Gloucestershire, England around 1494 about ten years after Martin Luther was born. He was born into a pretty well off family. David Daniels in his Biography of Tyndale makes the comment that the area that Tyndale grew up in was a hot bed of "Lollardry."

Around the year 1506 Tyndale, only 12 years old, entered Oxford attending Magdalen College.

John Fox writes of Tyndale at this time, he states:

"William Tyndale, the faithful minister of Christ, was born about the borders of Wales, and brought up from a child in the University of Oxford, where he, by long continuance, increased as well in the knowledge of tongues, and other liberal arts, as especially in the knowledge of the Scriptures, whereunto his mind was singularly addicted; insomuch that he, lying then in Magdalen Hall, read privily to certain students and fellows of Magdalen College some parcel of divinity; instructing them in the knowledge and truth of the Scriptures. His manners and conversation being correspondent to the same, were such that all they that knew him reputed him to be a man of most virtuous disposition, and of life unspotted." *Fox's Book of Martyrs CHAPTER XII - The Life and Story of the True Servant and Martyr of God*

Tyndale makes a remark later in life in his book "The Practice of Prelates." He states that the universities would not let the students look on the scriptures until they had been taught eight or nine years of heathen learning by which they became so corrupted in thinking that they were shut out of understanding the scriptures correctly. Tyndale

clearly disapproved of this practice and believed all men should have access to the Scriptures. Tyndale would become fluent in eight languages over his lifetime: Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Spanish, French, Italian, English and German.

It must be said that learning Greek was impossible in Europe until the years after the Fall of Constantinople in the year 1453. At that time many Greek scholars fled the Muslims into Europe bringing with them their Greek manuscripts of the Bible and other classical Greek writings. These men then began to teach Greek throughout Europe and this opened up whole new avenues of learning. This and the invention of the printing press in 1450 by Gutenberg were crucial developments without which the Reformation would not of happened. One such Greek scholar in Tyndales time was Desiderius Erasmus. Erasmus had been teaching Greek at Cambridge University from 1511 to 1514. J.A Wylie in his history relates how the priests had been so angry about this new learning that they essentially drove Erasmus out of the country. Erasmus later relocated to Basle Switzerland where in 1516 he published his Novum Instrumentum. This consisted in the Greek New Testament in one column and a new translation by Erasmus into Latin in the other column. This publication exposed many of the errors in the Latin Vulgate of the Roman Catholic church. For example the word metanoeo which means to "think differently" and is translated as repent in our bibles was translated as "do penance" in the Latin Vulgate. Erasmus's Bible would make its way to London, Oxford and Cambridge, where it was received with much enthusiasm. Tyndale would eventually use Erasmus's 1522 edition of the Greek New Testament for his 1526 English translation.

Tyndale eventually went to Cambridge, and then he took a job as a tutor and private chaplain for the family of Sir John Walsh at little Sodbury manor. While he was at little Sodbury manor they would often have many of the local Bishops and Priests over for dinner and they would converse and debate about many things. At one point one of these men blasphemously said that it was better to be without Gods law then the Popes law. At which point Tyndale, fired with godly zeal, replied with.

"I defy the Pope and all his laws, if God spare my life ere these many years, I will cause the boy that driveth the plough to know more of the scripture then thou dost!"

Clearly Tyndale had already begun thinking about translating the Scriptures into English, and some think he began translating at little Sodbury. From little Sodbury he went to London in 1523 to seek approval from Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London, to translate the scriptures from the Greek into English but found no favour from Tunstall for this work. It was now clear to Tyndale that he would receive no help from the Catholic clergy in England to translate the scriptures and that he must be willing to work outside of them.

By Gods Providence, Tyndale who had began preaching in London, was approached by one of his hearers, Humphrey Monmouth. Humphrey was a Lutheran sympathizer and took Tyndale into his house. Humphrey was also an Alderman, which was a person that ran a shipyard. It was here that Tyndale most likely began translating the New Testament into English with the help of John Firth.

Wylie States:

The two scholars had been a full half-year engaged in their work, when the storm of persecution broke out afresh in London. Inquisition was made for all who had any of Luther's works in their possession, the readers of which were threatened with the fire. "If," said Tyndale, "to possess the works of Luther exposes one to a stake, how much greater must be the crime of translating the Scriptures!" His friends urged him to withdraw, as the only chance left him of ever accomplishing the work to which he had devoted himself. Tyndale had no alternative but to adopt with a heavy heart the course his friends recommended. "I understood at the last," said he, "not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England." Stepping on board a vessel in the Thames that was loading for Hamburg, and taking with him his Greek New Testament, he sailed for Germany.

Tyndale eventually completed his English New Testament and sought to have it printed. He went to Cologne, and as the New Testament was being printed Tyndale was warned that the authorities had found out and were on their way to stop the printing. Tyndale rushed to the printing house and grabbed the printed sheets and was able to board a boat going up the Rhine river to Worms. He barely escaped the hands of his enemies, they arriving at the printer just moments after Tyndale had left.

As Providence would have it Tyndale's New Testament was to be printed in the German city of Worms. Just four years earlier in 1521, a German monk named Martin Luther was summoned there to answer for the charge of heresy before the emperor and the church because of the books of protest which he had written. When asked to recant Luther made a bold and heroic stand declaring.

"Unless I am convinced by Holy Scripture and plain reason I will not recant. For my conscience is held captive to the Word of God and it is neither right nor safe to go against conscience. Here I stand, God help me."

Tyndale's New Testament was printed successfully and Wylie states 1500 copies were dispatched to England. They were smuggled into England no doubt with the help of Humphrey Monmouth and his merchants who, when they were eventually raided, were found to be in possession of a number of Luthers writings, Monmouth himself would eventually be imprisoned by Thomas More. This was extremely dangerous work but these men also had a conviction that the Word of God belonged in the hands of the English people. The Merchants handed off the Bibles to one Thomas Garret who began to distribute them. He eventually brought many of them to Cambridge and Oxford where they were bought up with enthusiasm. Tyndale's New Testament was sold for 40

times less then a Wycliffe Bible would have been at this time and therefore was far more accessible to the common man.

Wylie makes the comment “The scriptures sowed the seed in England and the blood of the martyrs water it.” The London Bishop Tunstall (whom Tyndale had tried to get permission from to translate) preached against the supposed “errors” in Tyndales translation and had many of them burned at St. Pauls Cathedral.

Not only did Rome burn Tyndale’s New Testament but they also burned those who dared to read it. Many had to seal their testimony with their blood.

Tyndale would continue to live on the continent basically on the run or in hiding. At some point he must of learned Hebrew and began translating the Old Testament. At one point John Foxe relates how while he was travelling by sea up the coasts to have the first five books of Moses printed in Hamburg he was shipwrecked and lost all his work. He survived and Foxe tells us that Miles Coverdale eventually met up with Tyndale and helped him redo the Old Testment Translation. He completed up to 2 Chronicles and also did the book of Jonah by 1534. Tyndale also wrote many theological and polemical works, defending himself and his principles against the zealous papist Sir Thomas More who wrote extensively against Tyndale and his work. Tyndale would publish a revision of his New Testament in 1534. in 1535 while living at the English house in Antwerp Belgium he was betrayed to the authorities by a young Englishman named Henry Philips (Some think this was a plan hatched by Thomas More). Tyndale was then taken to Vilvorde Castle where he lay in prison for a year and a half. Finally in 1536 he was lead out to the stake to be burned as a heretic. Tyndale cried out one last prayer.

“Lord, Open the king of England’s eyes!.”

Then he was strangled and his body burned.

This last prayer was gloriously answer by the Lord. While Tyndale was in prison Coverdale completed the Old Testament Translation and continued to smuggle Bibles into England. John Rodgers revised this work and produced the Matthews Bible, which was the first to be printed in England. In 1538 a royal order was issued, appointing a copy of the English Bible to be placed in every parish church so that all might come and read. This was the answer to Tyndale’s prayer. Thomas Cromwell then commissioned Mile Coverdale to revise his original translation, which resulted in the Great Bible of 1539. Then during the reign of the Catholic Queen Bloody Mary from 1553 to 1558 fleeing Protestants produced the Geneva Bible at Geneva Switzerland in 1560. in 1568 the church of England produced the Bishops Bible to combat the popularity of the Geneva Bible. Around 1604 King James then commissioned 53 scholars to produce a new Bible. This Bible was completed by 1611 and became know as the Authorized or

King James version of the Bible and eventually became the standard Bible for nearly 400 years in Protestant churches. A recent computerized study has revealed that 84% of the New Testament and 74% of the Old Testament in the King James Bible is taken verbatim from Tyndale's work. The King James translators used the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts but they also consulted all the available English versions when making their translation and most of the time they went with what Tyndale had already translated. This is evidence of the knowledge that Tyndale possessed of the original languages and his skill of being able to accurately translate into English.

Indeed Tyndale is credited with giving English to the English and it was a thoroughly Biblical English which he crafted. The English people would become known as "a people of the book" and the rhythmic phrases of Tyndale's English Scriptures would become woven into the fabric of the nation and of the nations which English speaking people would eventually form. Some of the phrases that come directly from Tyndale are:

Let there be light
Am I my brothers keeper?
The powers that be
The salt of the earth
The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak
Signs of the times
A law unto themselves
It came to pass
An eye for an eye
A broken heart
The apple of his eye
The Lord bless thee and keep thee
Judge not lest ye be judged
Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith
Blind lead the blind
Eye for an eye
Fight the good fight
No man can serve two masters
Harden his heart
By their fruits ye shall know them
Dreamer of dreams
Bottomless pit
Go through the eye of a needle
Be of good cheer

Tyndale also coined new theological words when there was no corresponding English word for the Greek or Hebrew, some of which are: Atonement, Scapegoat, Mercy seat, Passover, Jehovah, and Shewbread

Some other important changes that he made from the traditional Latin were:

Do Penance to Repent
Church to Congregation
Priest to Senior or Elder
Charity to Love

Confess to Acknowledge

Jonathon D More also makes this comment in his article written about the influence of Tyndale's translation:

"Another example of how Tyndale established a pattern for early Protestant biblical English is that Hebrew and Greek syntax is often 'noun-of-noun' as in 'man of God', 'fish of the sea', 'the Kingdom of God' and so on. Tyndale avoids the more natural and fashionable English of his day at this point—'a godly man', 'seafish', 'God's kingdom'— as that would have been to invert the original language's word order unnecessarily. Tyndale's choice here has not only shaped the development of biblical English, but the English language in general. Today, for example, we speak of 'the lamb of God' and never 'God's lamb'; of 'the rule of law' and not 'law's rule'."

THE AUTHORISED VERSION: The Influence of William Tyndale's Translations Dr. Jonathan D. Moore, Articles - Trinitarian Bible Society www.tbsbible.org

Conclusion

The printing and distribution of Tyndale's 1526 New Testament in English was a world changing event. Tyndale once said "it is impossible to establish the laity (common man) into any truth unless the Scripture be plainly set forth before their eye." This was his great life mission, to get the Holy Scriptures into the hands and minds of the common people. We must give thanks and praise to God alone for the work of Tyndale and those that helped him, and for the great blessings that have come as a result of their labours.

The prophet Amos had warned the nation of Israel in the Old Testament that:

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God,
that I will send a famine in the land,
not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water,
but of hearing the words of the Lord: Amos 8:11

This was the case for the most part in England up until the time of the Reformation. The prophet Jeremiah declares *"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?"* Jer 23:29. And so it was that in the appointed time of Him who "worketh all things after the council of His own will" that the Word of God went forth and as it were burned up hundreds of years of false doctrine and broke in pieces the power of the Roman church over the minds of the common man.

In our day, Satan's strategy has changed some what, instead of concealing the Word of God in a foreign language, he has sought to undermine the Bible as the inspired, inerrant, and preserved Word of God and as a result, despite the numerous Bible

translation and the easy access to the Scriptures, people have little to no interest in the Bible and believe it is a book filled with myths and errors. Even in the professing church this is increasingly becoming popular as academics and scholars continue their attack on the veracity of the Holy Scriptures.

But let us take heart and trust in Him who has said that “not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass away until all be fulfilled” and that “the Scripture cannot be broken”, and also “Sanctify them by thy truth, Thy word is truth.” Paul says, “Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.” So lets us continue the legacy of Tyndale to set forth Scriptural truth before the eyes of the common man, praying that the Lord of the harvest might send forth His Spirit to once again draw hearts to Christ.

Tyndale was a man of principle, courage, integrity, and faithfulness. Oh that the Lord might again raise up men with these holy virtues to preach his everlasting gospel. May He by his Spirit implant these graces into our hearts that we would not turn to the left nor to the right but live and die to the glory of God who has called us out of darkness and into his marvellous light.

Let us end with Hebrews 4:12

For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.