



THE
TORCHLIGHTERS
HEROES OF THE FAITH

Leader's Guide for

**The William
Tyndale
Story**

From Christian History Institute

L E A D E R

Table of Contents

Introduction to the Torchlighters Series	3
Synopsis of <i>The Torchlighters: The William Tyndale Story</i>	4
Teaching Plan for <i>The William Tyndale Story</i>	5-9
Craft Corner: Bible Reminder Projects	10
Suggested Verses for Bible Reminder Projects	11
Letter to Parents	12
The Main Players in the William Tyndale Story	13-14
The 16th Century World of William Tyndale	15-16
Chronology of William's Story	17-18
Quotable Quotes	19
History of the English Bible	20-21
The Rest of the Story	22
Additional Materials	23
New Torchlighter Episodes Coming Soon / About CHI	24
Answers to Student Handouts	25

Introduction to the Torchlighters Series



Torchlighter: *One who commits to serving God and passing on the light of the Gospel, even if the going gets tough.*

Kids today have no shortage of heroes. From Hollywood celebrities, to music artists and sports figures, it would seem that there are plenty of heroes to go around. The heroes being offered up by popular culture are teaching children that physical perfection, financial success, and fame are the most important goals in life. The morals and values presented by these heroes are often in direct opposition to the standards parents want to pass on to their children. So, while there is no shortage of heroes, there is a dreadful shortage of heroes worth emulating.

The Torchlighters video series has been created to offer children real heroes that are worth emulating. The heroes we choose to portray have lived truly great lives—lives marked by moral depth, strength of character, and an unswerving commitment to faith. By sharing in their struggles and small steps of obedience, we are all challenged to live lives of faith. It is our sincere desire that as children get to know these “torchlighters,” they will be challenged to follow in the footsteps of the greatest torchlighter of them all, Jesus Christ.

Learn more about the mission behind this new series at

www.torchlighters.org

Synopsis of *The Torchlighters:* *The William Tyndale Story*

There is no turning back for William Tyndale. Come what may, he is determined to translate the Bible into English. The King of England, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Holy Roman Emperor will go to any extreme to stop him – even having William killed. He is a fugitive from the government and the church!

As a gifted linguist with an M.A. from Oxford University, William could have enjoyed the quiet life of a scholar. Yet, there is a problem that haunts him. Very few people in 16th century England can read the Scriptures. The reason for this is obvious—the Bible is written in Latin, a language most people (including clergy) cannot understand. William's conviction that Scripture is meant for all people is not shared by the established church. As he told one church official, "If God spare my life...I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of Scripture than thou dost."

William's decision to follow his calling forces him to live a life of exile. With both the government and the church opposing him, he must work in secret, moving about the continent of Europe. There are supporters who help him along, but betrayers may lurk around any corner. The years of running and hiding begin to pay off for William in 1526 with the publication of the English New Testament. Once smuggled into England, the books are eagerly devoured by spiritually starved Christians.

The heroic life story of William Tyndale ends tragically. A "sheep in wolf's clothing" named Henry Phillips befriends William in order to betray him to the authorities. His betrayal leads to Tyndale's arrest and eventual death by burning. He never gets to see that within one year, the King of England authorizes an English translation of the Scriptures. William Tyndale's work is used as the basis for this translation and many other translations to follow, including the 1611 King James Bible.

We owe a great debt of gratitude to this man who placed such a high value on the Word of God that he would give his life so others could have access to the Scriptures in their own language. The continuing work of the translation of Scripture into the native languages of thousands of nations has allowed millions of Christians around the world to read the Bible for themselves.



Teaching Plan for *The William Tyndale Story*

1. Preview – Take time to preview this film before showing it to your students. This will help you to recognize major themes and teachable moments that occur throughout the film. In addition, you will gain a better understanding of the flow of the story and will be equipped to answer questions the kids may have.

Major teaching themes include:

- The Bible is God's Word to all people, a book like no other.
- Some have given their own lives in order to make the Bible accessible to us in our language.
- God calls His people to service.
- Following God's call can require personal sacrifice and long hours of labor.
- Those who serve God will need determination to overcome obstacles and disappointments.
- On some occasions, serving God may be in conflict with established authorities.

2. Review Supplementary Information – Watch the bonus interviews on the video and review the various supplemental materials we have provided in this guide. The sections entitled “Main Players, The 16th Century World of William Tyndale, The History of the English Bible and Chronology of William's Story” will help to fill in details of William's life, and prepare you to answer questions.

3. Select and Prepare Teaching Material – Follow the 4 lessons plans we have provided, or mix and match the materials in a new way. All material is reproducible and designed to help children apply the teaching themes. Remember to consider the age of your students and the time you have available.

***Glimpses For Kids* pamphlets**

These colorful pamphlets on the life of William Tyndale are the perfect accompaniment to the film. Order in bundles of 25 for just \$2.50 from Christian History Institute at www.chinstitute.org or 1-800-468-0458. A sample of this resource is included in your product packaging.



Session 1 – Focus: Highlight the importance of the Scriptures and get a feel for Bible translation.

- **Bible Check Up (p. 3 in Student Guide)** – Use this sheet as a fun opener to see if students can match up the Bible facts. This will get students thinking about the topic and help you to gauge their knowledge.
- **Know Your Books (p. 4 in Student Guide)** – How is the Bible different from other books? The Word of God stands alone as a source of revealed truth and is therefore the only book worth dying for. Help kids to analyze the books we've listed. How trustworthy are they, when compared to the Bible? Bring in a sampling of books for students to analyze. There are no right or wrong answers here, other than that the Bible is the only book that is fully trustworthy.
- **Bible Translation is Hard Work (p. 5 in Student Guide)** – Finish the first session by having students try their hand at Bible translation. Students will understand how hard Bible translating is. End the session by telling the students that next time they will see an exciting video about the life of famous Bible translator William Tyndale. If time permits, show the video opener to give students a taste of what they will see next week.

Note: Refer to the answer key on page 25 for answers to selected student pages.

Session 2 – Focus: View The William Tyndale Story and discuss the key concepts.

- **Review** – Review concepts covered last time: The Bible is a book like no other and Bible translation is hard work.
- **Introduce the Video** – “We live in a time and a place where we are free to own a Bible and read it in our own language. Can you imagine not being able to ever read or even hear the Word of God in your language? Well, that’s the way it was 400 years ago in England. The Bible was only available in Latin and most people couldn’t read or understand Latin. Today we will see the story of a man who decided that all people should be able to read and hear the Bible in their own language.”
- **Show the Video**
- **Respond** – Allow students time to process the film and ask questions. Use the pages “Story Mix-Up” and “Matching Game” to help review the story (**pp. 6 and 7 in Student Guide**).
- **Discuss** – Use the pages “Dig into the Story” and/or “Dig Deeper” to lead discussion and help students apply key concepts (**pp. 8 and 9 in Student Guide**).
- **Parent Letter (p. 12 in Leader’s Guide)** – If appropriate, distribute this letter to help parents understand the lessons you are sharing in class.

Note: Refer to the answer key on page 25 for answers to selected student pages.

Session 3 – Focus: Bible translation is difficult work and important for evangelism.

- **William's Translation Tools (p. 10 in Student Guide)** – Use this page to help students understand the difficulty of William's task. Students may be surprised to know that even basic dictionaries did not yet exist. Emphasize that although we have many more tools available to us today, the work is still difficult.
- **Foreign Language Interview (p. 11 in Student Guide)** – Invite a guest who is fluent in a foreign language to share with your class. Use the suggested questions on the "Foreign Language Interview" page to get the discussion started.
- **Translation Fun (p. 12 in Student Guide)** – An activity to bring home the concept of translating. Use the discussion question provided on the activity sheet.

Optional activity: In order to gain a better understanding of just how important William's work was, have children visit a church that uses a language they don't know for its services. As they witness the church service, have them think about what it would be like to have such a service as their only link to the truth of the Gospel.

Note: Refer to the answer key on page 25 for answers to selected student pages.

Session 4 – Focus: The Bible should impact our lives – hands on activities.

- **The Bible in Many Forms (p. 13 in Student Guide)** - The Bible has been recorded in many ways throughout history. Have students see if they can put the various media in order beginning with the oldest. Discuss how the method for conveying the message may change, but the message is still the same.
- **Discuss:** Deuteronomy 6:6-9 tells how God commanded the Israelites to keep reminders of His laws. They were to teach the Lord's commandments to their children and talk about them all the time. They were to tie them on their hands, bind them on their foreheads and even write them on the doorframes of their houses. If they were discussing God's laws and wearing reminders and seeing reminders every time they came into their home, they were more likely to keep God's commandments. Today you will lead your students in creating their own Bible reminder. Help children make the connection that the truth of the Bible should have an honored place in their home and their life.
- **Select a verse:** Help students to select a verse that will remind them to follow God or give the Bible an honored place in their lives. Some suggested verses are provided on page 11.
- **Choose a project:** Plans for two Bible reminder projects are included on page 10. Select one to do with your class. Encourage students to make a plan to give the Bible a prominent place in their own life and to use their project as a reminder.
- **Additional Resources (pp. 14-17 in Student Guide):** Use coloring pages or any pages you haven't yet used to complete this final session on the life of William Tyndale.

Note: Refer to the answer key on page 25 for answers to selected student pages.

Craft Corner: Bible Reminder Projects

Project 1: Clay Tablets

Materials: Enough self hardening clay and a wooden stylus for each child. Heavy duty tooth picks, sharpened dowels, or wooden skewers could be used in place of the stylus if needed.

Procedure:

1. Have each child choose a verse or suggest a verse for the entire class to use. Some verse suggestions are included on page 11.
2. Distribute clay and writing tool to each student.
3. Instruct students to flatten their clay into a stone tablet shape, about 6 inches tall by 5 inches wide and 1/2 inch thick.
4. Students will then use the writing tool to neatly write their verses on the tablet.
5. Allow adequate time for the project to dry before sending it home.

Project 2: Keychain

Materials: Shrinkable plastic (such as Shrinky Dinks), fine sand paper, colored pencils, stone tablet template (page 11), hole punch, key chain rings or clips.

Procedure:

1. Have each child choose a verse or suggest a verse for the entire class to use. Some verse suggestions are included on page 11.
2. Give each child a piece of plastic cut to 5" x 4", a piece of sand paper, and a template of the stone tablet.
3. Instruct students to sand the rough side of the plastic so it will hold the color. Students should then lay the plastic over the template and trace the shape of the stone tablet onto the plastic.
4. Have students cut out their plastic tablets.
5. Punch holes in top of each tablet. Make the hole bigger than a normal hole punch to allow for the hole to shrink.
6. Have students neatly write the verse on the rough side of the plastic.
7. Shrink plastic in oven or toaster oven according to manufacturer's directions. This must be done by an adult.
8. Have students attach their mini "stone" tablet to a key ring or clip.

Suggested Verses for Bible Reminder Projects

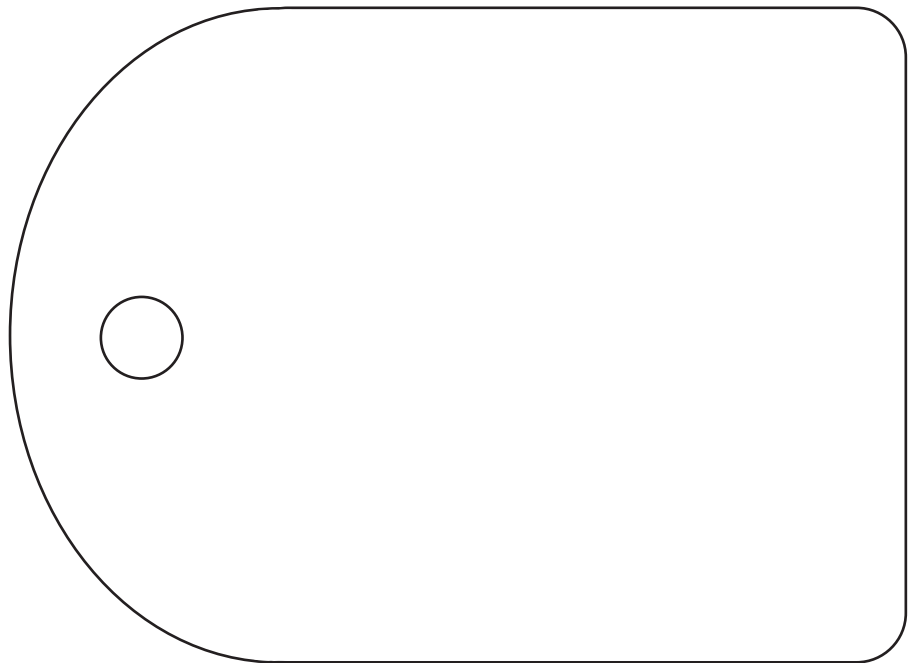
"Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." Deuteronomy 6:5

"Choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve. But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD." Joshua 24:15

"What does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Micah 6:8b

"I can do everything through him who gives me strength." Philippians 4:13

"Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." Hebrews 12:1b



Stone tablet template
for Project 2: Keychain
on page 10

Dear Parents,

Today in Sunday school, your child viewed a *Torchlighters* video depicting the life of Bible translator William Tyndale. In 16th Century England it was illegal to translate the Scriptures into English. William Tyndale chose to go against the church and government laws of the day in order to bring the Bible to the common people who were unable to read or understand Latin. For this William became a hunted fugitive and eventually paid with his life.

William Tyndale never got to see that a year after his death the king of England gave permission for the Bible to be printed in English, and within three years an English Bible was placed in every church in England. In less than 100 years, Tyndale's work would form the basis for the King James version of the Bible.

William Tyndale is a terrific role model for children. He placed a high value on the Word of God, taking great care to translate accurately. He knew God's calling on his life and followed that calling even when great personal sacrifice was necessary. He also shows us the value of hard work and determination in the face of many trials. We hope this experience of learning through one of God's heroes of faith was a meaningful one for your child. If you have any questions or comments, please don't hesitate to ask.

Sincerely,

The Main Players in the William Tyndale Story

William Tyndale (c. 1494 - 1536)

William Tyndale was born around 1494 in Gloucestershire, England. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1514-15 after completing his M.A. at Oxford. After receiving his education, he became the tutor to the children of Sir John Walsh at Little Sudbury Manor. Tyndale's idea for translating the Bible into English came to him around 1522, but it was not until around 1524 that he approached Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London, for his support. While he failed to receive the bishop's support, during this same period he did gain the patronage of businessman Humphrey Monmouth. This made it possible for him to leave England and to register at the University of Wittenburg, in Germany. Printing of Tyndale's first translation began in 1525 at Cologne, but met with opposition from the local magistrates; it was completed at Worms. Tyndale then moved to the Netherlands, where he lived at the English House, a residence for English merchants, in Antwerp. There he revised his translation and prepared other works. In 1535 Tyndale was arrested and imprisoned at Vilvorde, near Brussels. The date of his strangulation and subsequent burning at the stake is usually given as October 6, 1536.

Ploughman

"The ploughman" refers to an oft-told story about Tyndale. Engaged in a heated conversation one night over dinner, Tyndale prophetically proclaimed to an adversarial priest that "If God spare my life, ere many years pass, I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the Scriptures than thou dost." This comment may have been prompted by events of the day, since some had been arrested, tried and killed for speaking the Lord's Prayer in English. The ploughman's arrest in our video program is representative of such events.

King Henry VIII (1491-1547)

Henry was the second son of Henry VII. He was born at Greenwich, England, in 1491. An exceptionally bright child, he learned Latin, French and Spanish. He loved music and was a composer as well as a performer. Henry also developed a love for hunting that remained with him all his life. King Henry VIII ascended to the throne in 1509 at the death of his father. A religious man by nature, Henry delighted in discussing theology with leading English scholars. He often attended mass several times a day and enjoyed listening to a good sermon. He initially opposed the Reformation and wrote *The Seven Sacraments* in 1521 in an attempt to refute the teachings of Martin Luther. The Pope gave him the title "Defender of the Faith" for his efforts. When his wife (Catherine of Aragon) failed to produce a male heir, Henry approached Pope Clement VII for an annulment. But Catherine's nephew, Charles V, the emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and the most powerful man in Europe, stepped in and persuaded the Pope to refuse Henry's request. Soon thereafter, Henry took advantage of the turmoil created by the Reformation, broke away from the Roman Catholic Church and became head of the Church of England in 1534. Thomas Cranmer, who was elevated to the office of Archbishop of Canterbury in 1533, then proceeded with Henry's annulment from Catherine and oversaw his new marriage to Anne Boleyn. Anne became the second of Henry's six wives.

Thomas Cardinal Wolsey (c. 1472-1530), Archbishop of York

Thomas Wolsey was born in Ipswich, England. He graduated from Oxford at fifteen, was ordained a priest in 1498 and later appointed as one of the domestic chaplains to the Archbishop of Canterbury. His administrative abilities were immediately noted and with the support of highly placed friends his political career was launched. Henry VIII's succession to the throne in 1509 helped Wolsey's political fortunes even more. Wolsey received several more ecclesiastical appointments and was made a Cardinal in 1515. That same year he became Lord Chancellor of England. Later King Henry called upon Wolsey to help him obtain a marriage annulment from Pope Clement VII. When in 1529 his efforts in this regard failed and Clement VII adjourned the hearing to Rome, Wolsey lost favor with the king. He died in disgrace at Leicester Abbey.

Sir John and Lady Anne Walsh

Known for their hospitality, Sir John and Lady Anne Walsh were the masters of Little Sodbury Manor. They hired William Tyndale to tutor their young children, thus providing him with a comfortable home and work environment, as well as financial support for his translation work. The Walshes were known to entertain both nobility and clergy. It was during one such social event that William made his famous comment about the ploughboy to a visiting cleric. The Walshes continued to support William financially, even when his calling led him away from their home. When he was arrested, they worked for his release.

Will Roy

William Roy volunteered to help William Tyndale in his Bible translation work. The former Franciscan friar probably adopted Protestant beliefs during his years of study at Cambridge. His relationship with Tyndale was rocky, but productive. Tyndale complimented Roy for his help "both to write and help me compare the texts together," but criticized his braggart spirit and his participation in uncharitable writings that did not reflect well on someone who had helped in the translation of the English Bible. Roy was burned as a heretic in 1531.

Henry Phillips

Henry ("Harry") Phillips was the son of a man who had served in parliament three times, was twice high sheriff, and also Comptroller of the Customs in Poole Harbor. Phillips enrolled at Oxford to study civil law. With a bright future before him and his father's inheritance funding the way, he chose instead to gamble it all away, and was soon mired in debt. Later, in Antwerp, Phillips was approached by an anonymous person with an offer to help the emperor capture William Tyndale. The payment for his part in the plot would cover his many debts. He successfully lured the unsuspecting Tyndale into the hands of the Emperor's officers on the ruse of going to dinner together.

The 16th Century World of William Tyndale

William Tyndale lived during one of the most turbulent times in European history. Born sometime in the early 1490s and put to death as a heretic in 1536, William's life straddles the end of the Middle Ages and the beginning of the Reformation. His life also encompasses the many changes that were occurring in church and society at the turn of the 16th century.

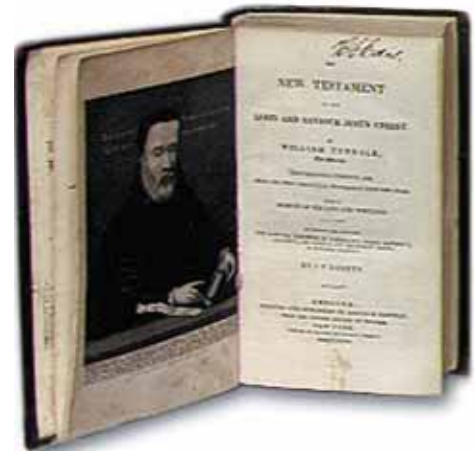
The invention of the movable type printing press by Johann Gutenberg in the middle of the 15th century and Erasmus' publication of the Greek New Testament at the beginning of the 16th century epitomized the age in which William lived. Gutenberg's printing press helped usher in the great technological changes that swept through the Western world over the next few centuries. And Erasmus' Greek New Testament represented the new scientific methods of research that urged scholars to study the original sources for greater accuracy. Both achievements were integral to William's translation work. The Greek New Testament provided the basis for William to translate the most accurate New Testament at that time. He used the same methods when he learned Hebrew to translate the Old Testament. The printing press made it possible for William to widely distribute his translation work and insured it the largest audience possible. Neither an accurate translation of the Bible nor its wide distribution was possible before the 16th century.

William did his translation work during the time of the great religious movement known as the Reformation. In 1517, when Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses to the door of the Wittenberg church, he argued that the Christian church had forgotten the central role of faith in the Christian life and instead had come to emphasize a doctrine of works. This idea, that salvation comes through faith alone, along with many other ideas that challenged the very authority of the Roman Catholic Church and its head, the Pope, started a religious and social revolution that changed the greater part of northern Europe and England. We are not exactly sure when William adopted the doctrines of the Reformation, but we know that he expressed Protestant sentiments during his college years. Luther's own translation of the Scriptures into German served as a model for William's first translation work. His early translations strongly echo Luther's German translation.

In a society where church and state were bound tightly together, a religious movement in the church was bound to leave its mark on the state. The king of England, King Henry VIII, used the social upheaval taking place in the church to break out from under the authority of the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church. Although a great defender of the Roman Catholic faith at the beginning of the Reformation, when opportunity arose he became the Supreme Head of the English Church. With this one bold stroke, Henry VIII gained control of the resources of the wealthy English Church and also granted himself an annulment from his first wife to side step a political crisis when they could not pro-

duce a male heir to the throne. Henry VIII's changing relationship with the Roman Catholic Church also affected William's life. Because Henry was a defender of the Roman Catholic faith during William's life, William was forced to live the life of a fugitive. Soon after Henry broke away from the Roman Catholic Church, a copy of William's translation of the English Bible became mandatory in every church in England, though it was published under a different name. Sadly, this took place only after William had been burned at the stake as a heretic.

The common people were also greatly affected by the religious, social and governmental upheaval occurring around them. The most important change took place within the hearts and minds of the ordinary believer. Martin Luther taught the priesthood of all believers — that is, that a Christian can go to God directly and is not dependent upon a priest — changed the way the common Christian thought about himself. One result was the advance of the idea of individualism. Each individual was important. The elevation of the status of each individual started a process that weakened social and governmental hierarchy. The results would be wide-ranging in its impact. And so, it is not surprising to learn that the first beginnings of democracy as a governmental system and capitalism as an economic system are found during this time. William's translation of the Bible into English also contributed to the new sense of individualism by making the Scriptures available to common people in England. The new English Bible meant that ordinary Christians no longer required a priest to explain to them what the Scriptures said or meant.



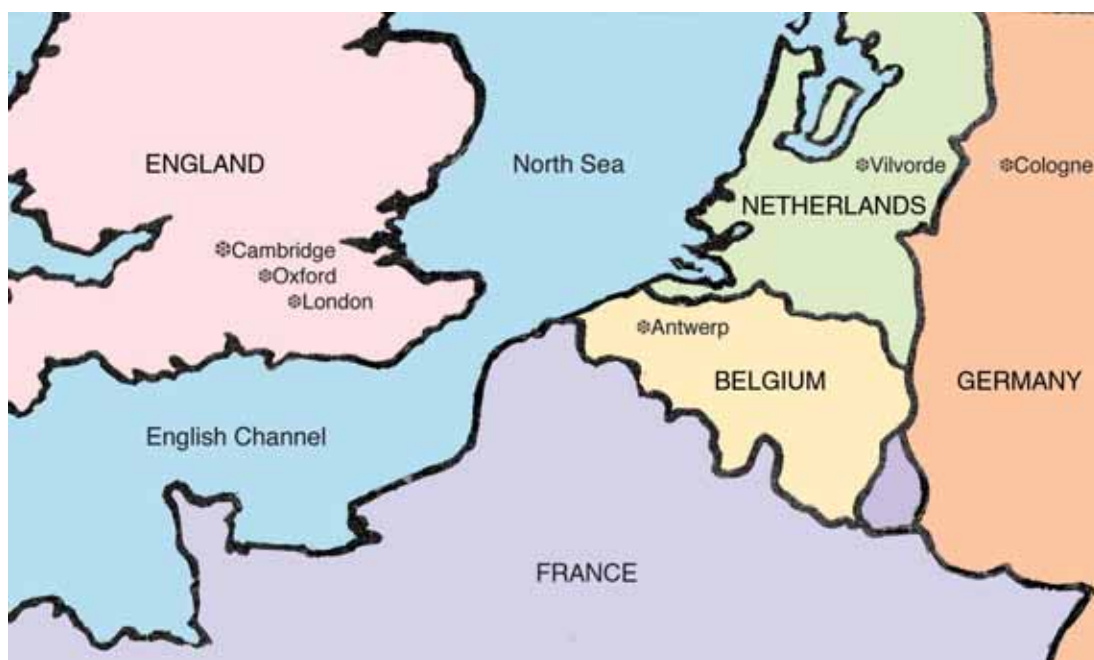
The Tyndale Bible New Testament was a "pocket book." Small enough to fit in a pocket, it was easier to smuggle and easier to carry around for personal reading. All William's books were printed as "pocket books." Photo from the Florida Bible Museum.

Chronology of William's Story

- c. 1492-1495 Birth of Tyndale in Gloucestershire County, England, near the Welsh border.
- 1508 Tyndale enters Magdalen School at Oxford. Translates portions of the Bible in English to read to his fellow students.
- 1512 Tyndale receives his Bachelor of Arts degree at Oxford.
- 1514-1515 Tyndale receives his Master of Arts at Oxford and is ordained to the priesthood.
- 1519 Tyndale moves to Cambridge for his doctorate but does not complete his studies.
- 1521 At the White Horse Tavern in Cambridge, students hold a study group including Tyndale, John Frith and Thomas Cranmer.
- 1521-1523 Tyndale becomes tutor to the children of Sir John Walsh at Little Sudbury Manor. His disputes with the area clergy lead to his arraignment on the charge of heresy. He translates Erasmus's *Enchiridion*.
- 1523 Tyndale moves to London and lives with Humphrey Monmouth.
- c.1524 Tyndale approaches Bishop Tunstall for approval and funding of the Bible translation. When he doesn't receive it, he obtains the assistance of Monmouth and goes to Germany where he registers at the University of Wittenberg.
- 1525 At Cologne he begins publication of his English New Testament. Discovered by the authorities, he leaves.
- 1526 Tyndale's New Testament is finally printed at Worms. It is the first English translation made directly from Erasmus' Greek New Testament. Copies are smuggled into England.
- 1527 Bishop Tunstall orders all copies of Tyndale's New Testament to be purchased and burned. These purchases help finance Tyndale's second edition.
- 1527-1530 Agents of the British government fail in their attempts to capture Tyndale, but he evades captivity.
- 1528 Publication of Tyndale's *Obedience of a Christian Man*.
- 1530 Tyndale's translation of the first five books of the Old Testament, printed at Worms, reaches England. *Practice of Prelates* also published this year.
- 1531 Henry VIII's agent, Steven Vaughan, meets with Tyndale, but Tyndale declines the king's

invitation to return to England since the king still won't approve an English translation. New Tyndale translations this year: *Book of Jonah* and *Exposition of the First Epistle of St. John*. Also publishes *An Answer to Thomas More's Dialogue*.

- 1532 Thomas More replies with *Confutation*, which Tyndale ignores.
- 1533 New printings: Tyndale's translation of Erasmus's *Enchiridion* and revisions of three chapters of Matthew's Gospel. His friend John Frith is burned at Smithfield.
- 1534 Printing of revised New Testament. Tyndale moves to Thomas Poyntz's boarding house for merchants at Antwerp, known as English House.
- 1535 Tyndale is arrested by officers of the Holy Roman Empire in a plot devised by Henry Phillips. Tyndale is taken to Vilvorde prison near Brussels.
- 1536 Tyndale is strangled and burnt at the stake for heresy. His final words are "Lord, open the king of England's eyes."
- 1537 Just one year after Tyndale's execution, King Henry VIII authorizes the Scriptures to be translated and printed in English. Tyndale's work forms the basis for this Bible, known as the "Matthew's Bible."
- 1538 The Great Bible, an English translation, is ordered to be placed in every church in England.
- 1611 King James Bible is completed and is heavily based on Tyndale's translation.



Quotable Quotes

Augustine of Hippo, 5th century theologian and church leader: “The Holy Scriptures are our letters from home.”

Ruth Graham, popular Christian writer and wife of Billy Graham: “If our children have the background of a godly, happy home and this unshakable faith that the Bible is indeed the Word of God, they will have a foundation that the forces of hell cannot shake.”

Jerome, 4th century Bible translator: “Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ.”

Mark Twain, 19th century American author and humorist: “Most people are bothered by those passages of Scripture they do not understand, but the passages that bother me are those I do understand.”

John Wesley, 18th century founder of Methodism: “I want to know one thing, the way to heaven: how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way; for this very end he came from heaven. He has written it down in a book! Oh, give me that book! At any price, give me the book of God!”

C.S. Lewis, British author and apologist: “Either the Bible will keep you away from sin, or sin will keep you away from the Bible!”

Abraham Lincoln, 16th president of the United States: “I am profitably engaged in reading the Bible. Take all of this Book that you can by reason, and the balance by faith, and you will live and die a better man.”

George Washington, first president of the United States: “It is impossible to rightly govern the World without God and the Bible.”

Douglas MacArthur, Five Star WWII general: “Believe me, sir, never a night goes by, be I ever so tired, but I read the Word of God before I go to bed.”

A.T. Robertson, 19th century world renowned Baptist scholar: “The greatest proof that the Bible is inspired is that it has stood so much bad preaching.”

Bono, popular music artist with U2 and activist: “My understanding of the Scriptures has been made simple by the person of Christ. Christ teaches that God is love.”

History of the English Bible

The writing of the English Bible is one of the great plotlines of the Christian church. What is more, the translation of Scripture into English represents a critical aspect of evangelism in Christian history. We often focus on the missionary who brings the gospel to those who have never heard, but fail to realize that the passing on of the Word of God in each nation's language is an equally important task in the development of a spiritually healthy Christian church. When the translation of the Bible into the people's language is neglected or forsaken, a weak church is sure to develop. It is not accidental, then, that one of the chief features of the Reformation was the translation of Scripture into the languages of the different nations of Europe. *The William Tyndale Story* tells the English side of this fascinating and significant story of the importance of Bible translation.

The roots of Bible translation reach back to the Jewish community in Alexandria, Egypt. Their decision in the 3rd century B.C. to translate the Old Testament into Greek, called the Septuagint or LXX, made the Hebrew Scriptures available beyond the confines of the immediate Hebrew culture. When the New Testament books and letters were penned in the first century, they were also written in Greek. As different ethnic peoples accepted the Christian faith, the practice continued and the Bible was quickly translated into such languages as Syriac, Coptic and Ethiopic in the Eastern half of the Roman Empire and Latin in the Western half.

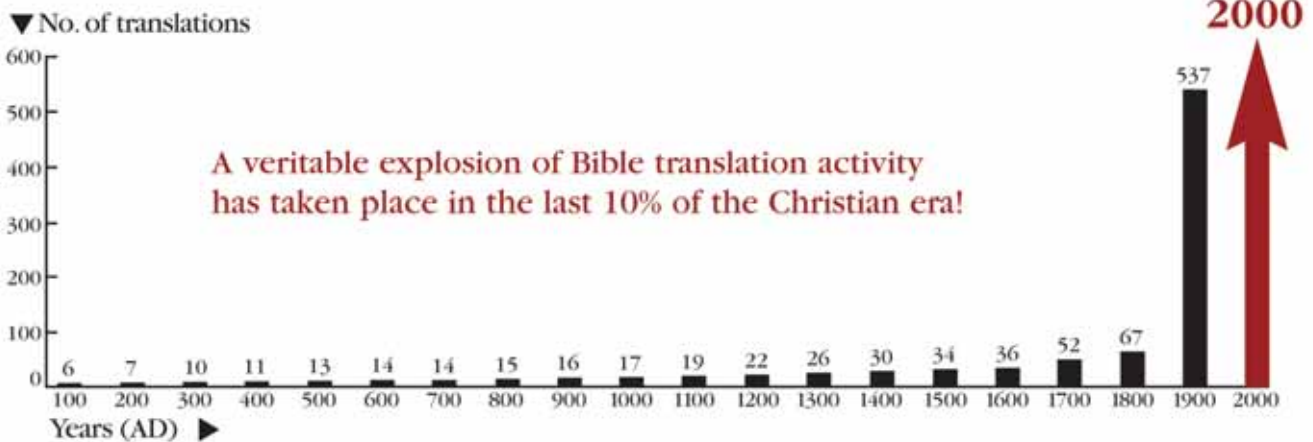
In the West, the authorized version of the Bible became known as the Latin Vulgate. Translated in the late 4th century by the Christian scholar Jerome, it remained the standard Scripture for the Western church for the next thousand years. As the church expanded beyond the Roman Empire's borders into northern Europe, it took its Latin Bible along. Instead of translating the Scriptures into the languages of the different peoples of northern Europe, the church tried to maintain uniformity so that every church looked like the church in Rome and spoke the language of the church in Rome. Latin language liturgies were used in places like Germany, England and Ireland. It is not surprising to learn that by the time of the Reformation, the church had declined to a poor state in these countries. The common people and most of the priests could not understand the service or read the Bible since they were both in Latin.

At this time in England, the church and the government viewed any act of deviation from the established church to be a threat to its power and authority. So when John Wycliffe and his followers, known as Lollards, translated portions of the Bible into English in the 14th century, the church and the government swiftly retaliated. Wycliffe and the Lollards became an outlawed religious group, were persecuted and saw their translated Scriptures confiscated and burned. In 1407, a Church Council at Oxford forbade any use of English translations of the Bible.

The appearance of Erasmus' Greek New Testament in 1516 aroused interest again in the translation of the Bible into English. As scholars throughout Europe and England re-read the Bible in its original Greek and Hebrew languages, they discovered that the Vulgate translation, accepted for over a thousand years, had many deficiencies. So the need for a new translation was now two-fold: to bring the Scriptures to the common people and to produce a more accurate translation.

William Tyndale led the way on this in England. Oxford educated, gifted in languages and sympathetic to Protestant ideas, he sacrificed what could have been a brilliant academic career to produce an English version of the Bible. The Roman Catholic Church in England and King Henry VIII both sought to have him arrested and put to death. In a time when church and state were united, any move to challenge the authority of the church was viewed as subversive to the state as well. What would happen if every Christian could read the Scriptures for himself or herself? The authorities rightly feared that it would upset the stability of the social order. So William was considered to be no different than a Lollard and was forced into hiding, eventually living as a fugitive on the continent. While he never saw his life's work bear fruit in England, one year after Tyndale's death King Henry VIII ordered that an English copy of the Bible — mostly based on William's work — be placed in every church in England. William's English translation also provided the bulk of the material for the King James Bible (1611).

Progress of Bible Translation Over Past 20 Centuries



The Rest of the Story

ALSO ON THE DVD

Interview with Dr. David Daniell, esteemed Tyndale Biographer

Dr. Daniell gives a vivid explanation of the world in which William Tyndale lived and the challenges he faced. Featuring clips from the dramatic film *God's Outlaw*, this mini-documentary supplies the rest of the amazing story of Tyndale's work and legacy. Actor and voice of William Tyndale, Russell Boulter, adds his inspirational take on the impact of Tyndale's commitment to translating the Bible into English in the face of persecution. So don't miss the opportunity to learn more about William Tyndale, his times, and his contribution to Reformation of the Church.

Interview with Russell Boulter, popular British actor

William Tyndale dedicated his life to making the Bible accessible to all people in the English language. We know the effect that this had on the countrymen of his day. But how does Tyndale's work affect us today? Actor Russell Boulter, known for his role in the British television series "The Bill" and the voice behind the character of William Tyndale in this presentation, tells us how his life was affected by reading the Bible. Find out how reading the Bible changed this actor's life and the career-altering decisions he had to make as a result.

Additional Materials

– **Videos/DVDs** (available from Vision Video at www.visionvideo.com or call 1-800-523-0226)

- *Discovering the Bible* - This four-part curriculum series is a basic introduction to the Bible, including how it came to be written, how it is organized, how it has survived, how it has transformed lives across the centuries, and more. Perfect for teens and adults, we recommend this resource be used concurrently with *The William Tyndale Story* for a complete inter-generational program.
- *God's Outlaw: William Tyndale* - A multiple award-winning drama on the life of the "Father of the English Bible," featuring Roger Rees as Tyndale. Viewers of all ages will enjoy entering the world of William Tyndale through this engaging drama.

– **Books** (available through your local Christian bookstore)

- *The Queen's Smuggler: William Tyndale* - Dave & Neta Jackson (*Trailblazer Books*, Bethany House)
- *William Tyndale: A Biography* - Dr. David Daniell (Yale University Press, 1994)

– **Magazines** (order through Christian History Institute — www.chinstitute.org or 1-800-468-0458)

- *Christian History* magazine #16 on William Tyndale
- *Discovering the Bible* magazine

– **Educational pamphlets for distribution** (order through Christian History Institute — www.chinstitute.org or 1-800-468-0458)

- *Glimpses for Kids # 6 - William Tyndale: He Was an Outlaw for God*. The story of William Tyndale told for children. Includes pictures, activities, and discussion questions. Recommended for class distribution.
- *Glimpses #59: God's Outlaw and Fugitive for Biblical Faith*. This two-sided handout, geared for older children and adults, tells the story of William Tyndale.



– **Websites**

- www.torchlighters.org - Visit our website to learn about upcoming episodes of Torchlighters. Check out the kids' section for an online quiz and other fun. This is also a great place to give us your feedback and suggest heroes for future episodes.
- www.tyndale.org

Give us your feedback:

Christian History Institute values your input. If you have comments or recommendations on the Torchlighters series, please share them through our website at www.torchlighters.org.

New Torchlighter Episodes Coming Soon

John Bunyan

To stop preaching just to save his own skin was unthinkable for this hero. But how would his work continue from the confines of a cold, hard prison, while his wife and blind daughter struggle to survive at home alone? Watch as John continues to serve his Lord in the most trying of circumstances, and goes on to write the book that would become the best seller of all time, after the Bible. Expected release: Spring, 2006



Eric Liddell

This hero has committed his Sundays to worship and rest, and he intends to keep that commitment. But with all of Scotland begging him to run for Olympic gold, it will be difficult to stand firm. Watch as the fastest man in the world chooses to honor God rather than chase a gold medal. Then watch how God uses Eric's deep commitment to the Christian faith to bring the light of the Gospel to China. Expected release: Fall, 2006



Visit www.torchlighters.org for up-to-date information on new releases.

Christian History Institute is a non-profit Pennsylvania corporation. We are non-denominational and seek to serve the entire Christian church, as well as the secular world. CHI seeks to provide an awareness of Christianity's role in the history and development of Western civilization and cultivate the values, freedoms, and moral foundations that have enriched our life and society.

Our aim is to make Christian history accessible to the general public through modern media formats that are visually attractive, communicate effectively and maintain scholarly integrity.

For more information about our ongoing projects, please visit

www.chinstitute.org and www.chi4kids.org

Answers to Student Handouts

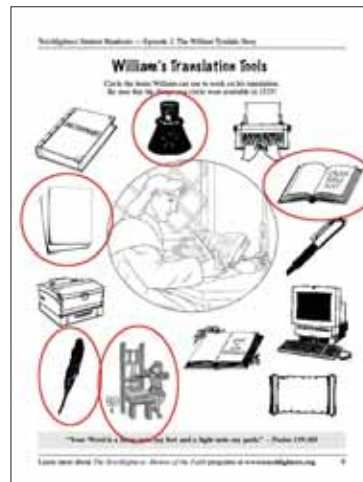
Bible Check-Up, page 3

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. G | 7. L |
| 2. K | 8. H |
| 3. E | 9. A |
| 4. B | 10. D |
| 5. J | 11. I |
| 6. C | 12. F |

Story Mix-Up, page 6

- | | |
|---|---|
| 3 | 6 |
| 8 | 2 |
| 1 | 4 |
| 5 | 7 |

William's Translation Tools, page 10



Matching Game, page 7

- William Tyndale - 4
- Will Roy - 9
- Ploughman - 6
- Sir John - 8
- Peter Quentel - 10
- Cardinal Thomas Wolsey - 2
- King Henry VIII - 5
- Lady Boleyn - 3
- Henry Phillips - 1
- Richard - 7

Translation Fun — You Be the Translator! page 12

“And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Matthew 28:20 (NIV)

The Bible in Many Forms, page 13 ►

- 1 - Stone tablet (approx. 1500-400 BC)
- 2 - Papyrus fragment (AD 45-100)
- 3 - Scrolls made of leather, and later of papyrus, were used to make copies of the Scriptures during the first century.
- 4 - Page from the Gutenberg Bible (1455)
- 5 - Cassette tape
- 6 - Computer diskettes
- 7 - Compact disc

