

why william tyndale?

In 1981, "A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS" received the Academy Award for Best Picture. It was the inspiring story of Sir Thomas More, a legal barrister and Chancellor of England who retained his integrity at the cost of his life.



No less of a martyr, and certainly no less of an idealistic individual deserving sainthood, was a contemporary of Thomas More's—in fact he was his nemesis—William Tyndale. The story of William Tyndale and the birth of the English Bible is one of the most inspirational and courageous stories of all time. It is a true story of incredible faith and unyielding commitment that has improved life for millions. His famous statement, "If God spare my life I will cause a boy that driveth the plough shall know more of the scripture than thou dost," was fulfilled. His bound translation was used throughout England and was carried by countless immigrants to America to become the foundation for a bold new nation.

William Tyndale lived in a day when the Bible was reserved solely for ordained priests educated in Latin. When Tyndale made it his life's work to bring the teachings of Christ and His Apostles to the common man and woman, he made himself the target of the church as well as of the British Crown. No efforts were spared to locate him, no deceit was too underhanded to trap him, and no punishment was too cruel to inflict upon him.

It took ten years to catch him, during which time William Tyndale published three ever-improving editions of the English New Testament, along with many books of the Old Testament. Today, his selections of words and phrases have become so commonplace that few do not know them. When King James commissioned his own Authorized Bible a hundred years after Tyndale, his scores of official scholars working together only found 10 to 15 percent that they could improve upon.

After nearly 500 years of relative obscurity, William Tyndale's courageous efforts need a voice. His story should become as commonplace as his translation. Next to the Savior himself, Tyndale is the person responsible for the most printed and most important book in the English language. The audience potential is massive. What began as a burning in one man's heart has become a flame of hope for all mankind. This groundbreaking new film, "Burnings of the Heart," will help it burn even brighter.

william tyndale

1. Tyndale was a noted scholar and linguist—fluent in eight languages.
2. He was educated at Oxford and Cambridge.
3. He bemoaned rampant ignorance of the scriptures among the English people as well as the clergy.
4. He felt strongly that the scriptures needed to be placed into all people's hands in a language the common man could understand, and risked his life to make that possible.
5. He observed widespread errors in the approved Latin text of the Bible.
6. He eloquently translated the New Testament from Greek into understandable English.
7. He translated parts of the Old Testament from Hebrew into this same English.
8. He coined the words or phrases: "Atonement; Jehovah; Passover; mercy seat; the still small voice; let there be light; in my Father's house are many mansions; a man after his own heart; with God all things are possible; be not weary in well doing; I stand at the door and knock; eat, drink and be merry; to die the death; the Lord's anointed; flowing with milk and honey; a stranger in a strange land; apple of his eye; let there be light; we live and move and have our being; fight the good fight; the signs of the times; the powers that be; a law unto themselves; shepherds abiding in their fields; and hundreds more.
9. He made a language for England, contributing more and reaching farther than even Shakespeare.
10. Ninety percent of the (King James) Authorized Version of the New Testament is still Tyndale's words today.
11. He left his homeland and lived ten years in exile to accomplish his translations undetected.
12. He was viciously denounced by Sir Thomas More and became largely and unfairly neglected from history.
13. He was finally captured in Brussels and imprisoned for 500 days in a cold, dark prison cell.
14. He was strangled and burned at the stake for his translations, even though authorization for his release had been obtained.
15. His work was accepted by King Henry and by most of the Christian world shortly after Tyndale's death, but without his name attached.

BURNINGS of the heart

the story of WILLIAM TYNDALE



story synopsis

“GOD BRINGETH NO MAN TO HEAVEN
EXCEPT HE SEND HIM TO HELL FIRST.”

—WILLIAM TYNDALE, FROM OBEEDIENCE OF A
CHRISTIAN MAN, P. 6

william tyndale was betrayed,
kidnapped and arrested on May 21, 1535 in
Antwerp and consigned to a Belgian prison
to await a hearing and possible sentencing. His only crime was translating the Holy Bible
into English. During what would become a sixteen-month captivity in the dark dungeon
of Vilvorde Castle, Tyndale found an unlikely audience eager to learn of his exploits.

His entire life, Tyndale's jailor had wished to see the world but necessity had kept
him tethered close to Brussels. When he became responsible for this well-traveled
celebrity, the jailor sought every opportunity to hear accounts of life on the
outside. With time on their side, the masterful Tyndale willingly described one
lavish landscape after another for his inquisitive keeper while also defending
his life's work before religious bigots and secular puppets.

During their months together, Tyndale told of struggles, quests of honor and
treacherous deceptions, stories of Oxford and Cambridge, of London and Worms
and Cologne. He spoke of a life of challenge, of courage, of compassion, of
dedication and inspiration, of education and sheer determination. He had
experienced shipwreck and bloodthirsty pursuit, had stood against pious leaders
and revealed their proscribed scriptures to all in a language the common man



King Henry VIII

could understand. He told of eluding the deadly
grasp of Henry VIII for ten years while seeing
friends face the wrath of a declining church
reeling from a challenge to her authority. He
ventured through hell that he might be better
prepared for heaven. When the executioner's
smoke finally settled, this jailor was left to realize
his exceeding good fortune at having known
this man. Though Tyndale was gone, the world
was made a little better for his having lived in it.

The contribution of William Tyndale can no longer be ignored. He was a man
singularly prepared for his time.

BURNINGS of the heart

the story of WILLIAM TYNDALE



Tower of London