

William Tyndale, the Wordsmith

William Tyndale left an enormous mark on the English language by coining many words and phrases still in use today:

- **Jehovah:** He composed this Name from the Hebrew Tetragrammaton YHWH
- **Passover:** Invented to accurately convey the meaning of the Hebrew word “Pesach”
- **Scapegoat:** A word Tyndale invented and used for the first time
- **Mercy Seat:** Invented for the cover of the Ark of the Covenant
- **Atonement:** Tyndale was the first to incorporate this word in Scripture for the reconciliation between God and mankind
- **Loving Kindness:** The covenantal kindness and mercy of God

Tyndale gave us much of the simple, rhythmic English phrasing that carried into the King James Version:

In the beginning God created

Let there be light

Am I my brother’s keeper?

The patience of Job

It came to pass

Seek, and ye will find

Ask, and it shall be given you

The salt of the earth

A city upon a hill

A law unto themselves

The powers that be

The signs of the times

Fight the good fight

The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak

In the twinkling of an eye

O death, where is thy sting?

Tyndale’s target audience was the common man, and when rendered in modern spelling, his translation reads surprisingly easy. However, at the time, English spelling was far from standardized. Even our alphabet wasn’t fully developed yet, and capitalization conventions weren’t settled. The first few verses of John 1:1-18 (download through the QR code on the front page) are in archaic spelling, followed by the passage in modern spelling.

**“If God spare my life, ere many years,
I will cause a boy that driveth the plough
shall know more of the Scripture than thou dost.”**

(Tyndale’s retort to a learned clergyman)

William Tyndale’s 1526 New Testament - A 500-Year Commemoration -



William Tyndale
c. 1494 - 1536

2026 is a momentous year for the English Bible as we celebrate the 500th anniversary of William Tyndale’s 1526 New Testament—a defining milestone in the history of the English Bible.

William Tyndale, a man of uncommon courage and linguistic ability, produced the first English New Testament translated from the original Greek. This monumental work was also the first English Scripture to be printed on the newly invented printing press. With remarkable foresight, he steered away from pulpit-sized Bibles to a format small enough to slip into a coat pocket. For the first time in history, ordinary men and women could own a personal copy of the Bible. Such a work was forbidden under penalty of death, and eventually Tyndale was betrayed, strangled, and burned at the stake. The Bible on our phones and in our hands came at a dear price!

Born at the dawn of the Age of Exploration, around the time that Columbus set sail across the Atlantic, Tyndale was God’s chosen man for the task. Though he could not have known that English would one day become the world language, his translation was foundational to that future. The King James Version, one of history’s most influential books ever published, draws 70–90%—depending on the passage—of the New Testament and Pentateuch from Tyndale’s pioneering work—an enduring testament to his linguistic brilliance and theological clarity.

Write the Words that Changed the World



Celebrate 500 years of Scripture in the hands of ordinary men and women by writing out John 1:1–18 from William Tyndale’s 1526 New Testament. Discover the clarity of his translation and experience the peace of God as you slow down and write the passage out, word for word. Follow the QR code to download everything you need.

**God soo loved the worlde/ that he gave his ȝly sonne for the entent/
that none that beleve in hym/ shulde perisshē.
Butt shulde have everlastyngē lyfe.**

(John 3:16 Tyndale’s 1526 New Testament)