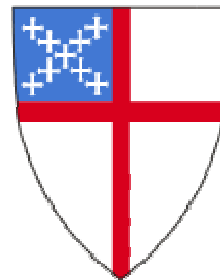


The Lessons Appointed for Use
on the Feast of
William Tyndale
Priest, 1536



October 6

The Collect

Almighty God, you planted in the heart of your servant William Tyndale a consuming passion to bring the Scriptures to people in their native tongue, and endowed him with the gift of powerful and graceful expression and with strength to persevere against all obstacles: Reveal to us your saving Word, as we read and study the Scriptures, and hear them calling us to repentance and life; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The First Lesson

James 1:21-25

Rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness, and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act-- they will be blessed in their doing.

The Psalm

Psalm 1 Page 585, BCP

- 1 Happy are they who have not walked in the counsel of the wicked, *
nor lingered in the way of sinners, nor sat in the seats of the scornful!
- 2 Their delight is in the law of the LORD, *
and they meditate on his law day and night.
- 3 They are like trees planted by streams of water, bearing fruit in due season, with leaves that do not wither; *
everything they do shall prosper.
- 4 It is not so with the wicked; *
they are like chaff which the wind blows away.
- 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand upright when judgment comes, *
nor the sinner in the council of the righteous.
- 6 For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, *
but the way of the wicked is doomed.

The Gospel

John 12:44-50

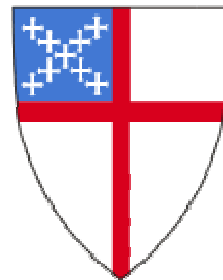
Then Jesus cried aloud: "Whoever believes in me believes not in me but in him who sent me. And whoever sees me sees him who sent me. I have come as light into the world, so that everyone who believes in me should not remain in the darkness. I do not judge anyone who hears my words and does not keep them, for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. The one who rejects me and does not receive my word has a judge; on the last day the word that I have spoken will serve as judge, for I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I speak, therefore, I speak just as the Father has told me."

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From the Original Tyndale Translation, 1526

James 1:21-25

21 Wherefore laye a parte all fylthynes all superfluite of maliciousnes and receave with meknes the worde yt is grafted in you which is able to save youre soules.

22 And se that ye be doars of the worde and not hearers only deceavinge youre awne selves with sophistrie

23 For yf eny heare the worde and do it not he is lyke vnto a man that beholdeth his bodyly face in a glasse.

24 For assone as he hath loked on him silfe he goeth his waye and forgetteth immediatlly what his fassion was.

25 But who so loketh in the parfaict lawe of libertie and continueth ther in (yf he be not a forgetfull hearer but a doar of ye worke) the same shall be happie in his dede.

John 12:44-50

44 And Iesus cryed and sayde: he that beleveth on me beleveth not on me but on him yt sent me.

45 And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me.

46 I am come a light into the worlde that whosoever beleveth on me shuld not byde in darcknes.

47 And yf eny man heare my wordes and beleve not I iudge him not. For I came not to iudge the worlde: but to save ye worlde.

48 He that refuseth me and receaveth not my wordes hath one that iudgeth him. The wordes that I have spoken they shall iudge him in ye last daye.

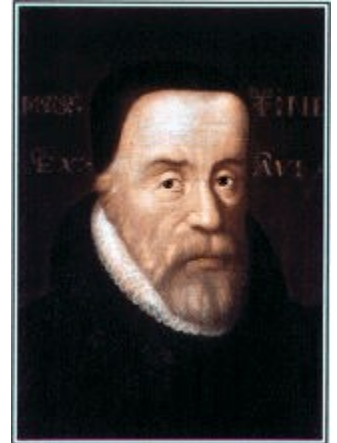
49 For I have not spoken of my selfe: but the father which sent me he gave me a commaundemet what I shuld saye and what I shuld speake.

50 And I knowe that this comaundement is lyfe everlastinge. Whatsoever I speake therfore eve as the father bade me so I speake.

WILLIAM TYNDALE [AND MILES COVERDALE]

TRANSLATORS OF THE BIBLE (6 OCT 1536, 1569)

William Tyndale was born about 1495 at Slymbridge near the Welsh border. He received his degrees from Magdalen College, Oxford, and also studied at Cambridge. He was ordained to the priesthood in 1521, and soon began to speak of his desire, which eventually became his life's obsession, to translate the Scriptures into English. It is reported that, in the course of a dispute with a prominent clergyman who disparaged this proposal, he said, "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth the plow to know more of the Scriptures than thou dost." The remainder of his life was devoted to keeping that vow, or boast. Finding that the King, Henry VIII, was firmly set against any English version of the Scriptures, he fled to Germany (visiting Martin Luther in 1525), and there travelled from city to city, in exile, poverty, persecution, and constant danger.



Tyndale understood the commonly received doctrine -- the popular theology -- of his time to imply that men earn their salvation by good behavior and by penance. He wrote eloquently in favor of the view that salvation is a gift of God, freely bestowed, and not a response to any good act on the part of the receiver. His views are expressed in numerous pamphlets, and in the introductions to and commentaries on various books of the Bible that accompanied his translations. He completed his translation of the New Testament in 1525, and it was printed at Worms and smuggled into England. Of 18,000 copies, only two survive. In 1534, he produced a revised version, and began work on the Old Testament. In the next two years he completed and published the Pentateuch and Jonah, and translated the books from Joshua through Second Chronicles, but then he was captured (betrayed by one he had befriended), tried for heresy, and put to death. He was burned at the stake, but, as was often done, the officer strangled him before lighting the fire. His last words were, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes."

Miles Coverdale (see below) continued Tyndale's work by translating those portions of the Bible (including the Apocrypha) which Tyndale had not lived to translate himself, and publishing the complete work. In 1537, the "Matthew Bible" (essentially the Tyndale-Coverdale Bible under another man's name to spare the government embarrassment) was published in England with the Royal Permission. Six copies were set up for public reading in Old St Paul's Church, and throughout the daylight hours the church was crowded with those who had come to hear it. One man would stand at the lectern and read until his voice gave out, and then he would stand down and another would take his place. All English translations of the Bible from that time to the present century are essentially revisions of the Tyndale-Coverdale work.

The best summary I know of Tyndale's writings on grace is found in C S Lewis's [*English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama*](#), Oxford UP, 1954), pp 187-191. [Note: this book has been reissued as [*Poetry and Prose in the Sixteenth Century*](#).] I will go

out on a limb and say that any Christian who reads English and is interested in the theological questions of the Reformation ought to read large portions of this work. In particular, I recommend pages 32-44, 157-221 (or at least 157-165 and 177-192), and 438-463.

by James Kiefer

Myles Coverdale (Also spelt Miles Coverdale) (c. 1488 – 20 January 1569) was a 16th-century Bible translator who produced the first complete printed translation of the Bible into English.

From 1528 to 1535, he appears to have spent most of his time on the Continent. In 1535 he published the first complete English Bible in print, the so-called [Coverdale Bible](#). As Coverdale was not proficient in Hebrew or Greek, he used 'five soundry interpreters' in Latin, English and 'Douche' (German) as source text. He made use of Tyndale's translation of the New Testament (following Tyndale's November 1534 Antwerp edition) and of those books which were translated by Tyndale: the Pentateuch, and the book of Jonah. The publication appeared in Antwerp and was partly financed by Jacobus van Meteren. In 1537, his translations were included in the Matthew Bible. In 1538, he was in Paris, superintending the printing of the "Great Bible," and the same year were published, both in London and Paris, editions of a Latin and an English New Testament, the latter being by Coverdale. That 1538 Bible was a diglot (dual-language) Bible, in which he compared the Latin Vulgate with his own English translation. He also edited the Great Bible (1540).



His translation of the Psalter is used in the [Book of Common Prayer](#), and is the most familiar translation of the psalms for many Anglicans all over the world. As a consequence, many musical settings of the psalms make use of the Coverdale translation. *(more from [Wikipedia](#))*

Since the above Tyndale bio was written, a well-regarded [biography of Tyndale](#) has been written by David Daniell, who has also edited modern-language reprints of Tyndale's Bible, both [New Testament](#) and [Old](#). Also available are [Wide as the Waters](#), an excellent overall history of the English Bible, including Tyndale's and Coverdale's contributions, and [God's Bestseller](#), which specifically focusses on Tyndale and the making of his translation..

Note: Clicking on any of the links above will take you to Amazon.com, where you may buy the book(s) if you wish.