

Least Among Men: The Enduring Testimony and Enduring Persecution of William Tyndale

By R. P. M. Davis

Contents:

The Ungodly 16th Century

Tyndale's Martyrdom a Final Testimony

Persecutions Follow a Faithful Witness

Tyndale Neglected and Misrepresented

Continuing Persecutions: 21st Century Examples:

- *Tyndale a Prophet to the Marginalized?*
- *Tyndale a Bitter Author of Ditties Who Shrieks Like an Animal?*
- *Tyndale a National Traitor in a Vernacular Literacy Movement?*
- *Tyndale a Betrayer and Judas?*
- *There is No Evidence That Tyndale Was Martyred for the Bible?*

Unremitting Voices Raised Against a Faithful Testimony

Least Among Men: Eternal Rewards

The Ungodly 16th Century

And I saw the wife drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the witnesses of Jesus. And when I saw her, I wondered with great marvel. (Revelation 17:6)

William Tyndale (c. 1494 – 1536) was a witness of Jesus, one of many whose blood was shed during the terrible times of the Reformation in the 16th century. He was hunted for years because certain leaders in a powerful, apostate Church, and also the kings and queens who partook of her wine, wanted to prevent him from giving his testimony, which was a particularly powerful one. And what was this testimony so hated and feared?



Tyndale's greatest testimony was his translation of the Greek and Hebrew scriptures into English. John Foxe called him God's Apostle to England because he so greatly contributed to bringing God's word to that country – almost single-handedly as to the New Testament, first published in 1526. In the decades following his death his faithful Bible translations, as incorporated into the *Matthew Bible* of 1537, formed the basis of all later important versions, including the Geneva Bible and the KJV.¹ He also wrote books and treatises to expound the scriptures, including such works as *The Parable of the Wicked Mammon*, *Pathway Into the Scripture*, and *The Obedience of a Christian Man*.

Tyndale's testimony also included his witness against certain teaching and practices of the Roman Catholic Church. One example only of practices that Tyndale and others such as Martin Luther objected to was the sale of 'indulgences': for money the Church would sell promises, called 'indulgences,' to set a person free from the consequences of sin and hasten his release from Purgatory. In Roman Catholic doctrine, Purgatory is an intermediate state of souls for expiatory purification after death – a place or state of punishment where those who die in grace make satisfaction for sin. Indulgences were fast tickets out: "When into the coffer the coin does ring, out of Purgatory a soul does

spring² – into a heaven full of sinners who had purchased righteousness, poor and rich alike. For more money, one could escape sooner. And for yet more, perhaps a relative could also be sprung. The Reformers denied the existence of Purgatory, and argued fiercely against the sale of indulgences: the Church, by putting itself in the place of God who (freely) forgives sins, was tapping into a stream that would never dry up, and through the fear of hell was making itself rich. Wrote Tyndale, they “do but empty Purgatory and fill hell”,³ and, “Wherefore serveth Purgatory but to purge thy purse...and rob both thee and thy heirs of house and lands and of all thou hast, that they may be in honour?”⁴ At the same time as these things were going on, certain authorities were hunting, imprisoning, torturing and killing people who spoke out against them. Men and women were burned alive, exiled from home, and suffered trials that are very difficult for some of us to imagine now. Passions and feelings ran understandably high.



Hawking indulgences in the market place.



The Pope signing and selling indulgences, gathering riches on earth. The Pope asked people to give to him and his Church in order to obtain release from the consequences of their sin – at their own cost.



Christ on the cross. Jesus died to obtain the Father's forgiveness of sins on our behalf. He bore our punishment in His own flesh. He gave everything on earth so we might be freely released from the consequences of our sin. He obtained forgiveness for us at great cost to Himself.

One might ask if a Church might do worse than sell forgiveness, but Tyndale also objected to other practices. An example was the sale of 'dispensations,' as they were called, to priests. These apparently enabled priests to freely keep a prostitute or a mistress. Priests were forbidden lawful marriage, but, for a price, could live in fornication. Thus dispensations were in effect licenses to sin. Wrote Tyndale:

Whosoever believeth in Christ, consenteth that God's law is good. The pope consenteth not that God's law is good. For he hath forbidden lawful wedlock unto all his, over whom he reigneth as a temporal tyrant with

laws of his own making, and not as a brother exhorting them to keep Christ's [laws]. And he hath granted unlawful whoredom unto as many as bring money: throughout Dutchland [Germany], every priest, paying a gildren to the archdeacon, may freely and quietly have his whore, and put her away at his pleasure, and take another at his own lust – like they do in Wales, in Ireland, Scotland, France, and Spain.⁵

Thus it was, then, that in this ungodly era the Church, meant to be the salt of the earth, was instead trading in and profiting from sin by the sale of dispensations. It was not just turning a blind eye, which would be bad enough, but it granted permission to sin to its ordained clergy in return for payment. Such things caused outrage, and many Reformers were wont to refer to impious clerics as “holy hypocrites” and “our Pharisees.”

Tyndale wrote exposing these things. He taught that such things, done in the name of the Lord, revealed Antichrist. Taking money to sell promises to set a sinner free from Purgatory instead of preaching the Gospel, fulfilled Paul's description of Antichrist who sets himself up as God (2 Thessalonians 2). For it is God alone, through faith alone in the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus, who releases men from the consequences of their sin – and this by the preaching of the Gospel, not by coins clinking in the coffer. Tyndale warned repeatedly about the reality and the present danger of Antichrist, and that he comes most guilefully as a Christian man. Miles Coverdale, co-author of the *Matthew Bible*, explained that “the devil chiefly desireth his seat to be in religion.”⁶ Of course it must be the case that the devil's ultimate coup would be a seat in Christendom.

Tyndale also wrote, consistent with early Reformation teaching that was quickly forgotten, that to take upon oneself the ordination of the apostate is to accept the mark of the beast⁷: an offensive witness to many, and earning great wrath. (Presumably Tyndale means that accepting ordination hypocritically for wrongful gain, or knowingly walking in false ways, and suchlike, is to take the mark of the beast. Tyndale himself was, as a young man, ordained a priest in the Roman Catholic Church.⁸ But like others, as his understanding grew, he believed he could have no part with it.) He contrasted the practices of the Roman Church, which did all for money, with those of true prophets who give as freely as they have received. He attempted to take down the strongholds of superstition that bound men to the Church and held them in thrall. And he wrote against the persecutions committed by the apostate Church, with its killing and burning and imprisoning. He said that the true church would never persecute.⁹

Tyndale also wrote with sweetness and strength to shed light on the true meaning of God's word; he preached repeatedly on the importance of love, and he himself demonstrated a great heart of love and mercy. A random sample of his teaching:

To be merciful is to have compassion and to feel another man's disease; and to mourn with them that mourn, and suffer with them that suffer; and to help and succour them that are in tribulation and adversity; and to comfort them with good counsel and wholesome instruction and loving words. And to be merciful is lovingly to forgive them that offended thee, as soon as they knowledge their misdoing and ask thee mercy. To be merciful is patiently long to abide the conversion of sinners with a lusty courage, and hope that God will at the last convert them, and in the meantime to pray instantly for them; and ever when he seeth an occasion to exhort them, warn them, monish them, and rebuke them. And to be

merciful is to interpret all to the best; and to look through the fingers at many things; and not to make a grievous sin of every small trifle...¹⁰

And as well as the theological significance of his work, Tyndale is credited with having greatly influenced the style and form of the English language – even more than Shakespeare – through his scripture translations, which were largely taken over by the King James Bible.¹¹ The KJV had a profound effect upon our language.¹²

The Lord God, in His mysterious purposes, permitted Tyndale's enemies to capture him before his Old Testament translation was complete. He was betrayed by a man named Henry Phillips, whom he had believed to be a friend. He was then imprisoned and tried for heresy, and strangled at a stake in 1536 in the town centre in the city of Vilvoorde, which is now part of Belgium, but was then under Spanish rule. His body was then burned in a fire lit about the scaffold. Thus was Antichrist's hatred both of the testimony and of the witness publicly and openly exhibited upon William Tyndale; one can easily perceive the similarities between what befell the servant at Vilvoorde, and what befell his Master at the hands of religious and secular powers in Jerusalem about 1,500 years previously.

Even before his capture, efforts to silence Tyndale and crush his testimony were fierce, and persecutions unrelenting. Laws were passed making it illegal to sell, buy, own or read his books or his Bibles. Violators could be imprisoned, fined, or burned alive.



Sir Thomas More

Tyndale's printers were subject to castigation. It was illegal to support him financially; even his own brother got into trouble for sending money. His books were repeatedly placed on lists of proscribed works, confiscated where they could be found, and burned. High ranking ecclesiastical officers preached passionately against him, accusing him of heresy (by which they meant heresy from the Church). Sir Thomas More, later sainted by the Roman Church, published volumes against Tyndale in order to discredit his translations and his books.¹³ More was one of Tyndale's most determined pursuers, though he met his end before Tyndale.

Tyndale's Martyrdom a Final Testimony

*But take ye heed to yourselves. For they shall bring you up to the councils and into the synagogues, and ye shall be beaten: yea and shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for a testimonial unto them. (Mark 13:9: Jesus to His disciples)*¹⁴



William Tyndale was killed in 1536 for translating the New Testament.

William Tyndale's martyrdom was his last, great testimony. By it was witnessed how the world, under the sway of the spirit of the age, especially when evil has gained great power, rejects both the word of God and those who bring it. As his body hung before the crowds in Vilvoorde, strangled and burnt, men no doubt reproached Tyndale as fallen and weak. How many really understand that he, and others who died for God's word, were following in the footsteps of their Lord? The scripture says of Jesus, "...as a root in a dry ground, he will have neither beauty nor favour. When we look upon him there will be no fairness:

we will have no desire for him. He will be the most simple, and despised of all, yet having good experience of sorrows and infirmities. We will reckon him so simple and so vile, that we will hide our faces from him” (Isaiah 53:2-4).

Tyndale, also despised by many, died for giving us a great gift. He gave English-speaking people a written testimony of enduring and inestimable value which, though under on-going attack,¹⁵ has continued over four centuries: the very word of God in their own tongue. God’s word as contained in the scriptures is, as Tyndale would say, the word of our soul’s health.

In truth, Tyndale is one of whom the scripture speaks, who receives the seed in good soil and bears fruit a hundredfold. Close study of his translation of the Greek and Hebrew testaments reveals the skill and understanding that informed his work. But more importantly, it shows that Tyndale was indeed divinely chosen and enabled to open God’s word to the world in the English tongue. That such a monumental testimony was crowned by martyrdom is no doubt fitting in the eyes of the almighty Lord and author of the word, whose ways are not our ways.

Persecutions Follow a Faithful Witness

Remember the saying that I said unto you: the servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, so will they persecute you. (John 15:20: Jesus to His Disciples)

The testimonies of Tyndale, and of his Master the Lord Jesus, and of all our Lord’s witnesses, was always of God’s word and truth. And such a testimony is always, and will always be, rejected by most men. Since a fuller testimony includes hard truths and telling men their deeds are evil, those who bring the same might expect to suffer more. Jesus wrote of the world, “Me it hates: because I testify of it that its works are evil” (John 7:7). So it will also be with His servants. In Old Testament times, the prophets testified to the people and kings of Israel, and were despised and rejected. Why did the prophets suffer? Tyndale asked. “Because they rebuked the hypocrites [who] beguiled the world, and...princes and rulers, and taught them to put their trust in things of vanity and not in God’s word.”¹⁶ In his time William Tyndale spoke and wrote plainly and fearlessly to expose similar vanities and to rebuke hypocrisy; therefore he was hated also.

That persecutions attend a faithful testimony is everywhere taught by scripture as well as by history. God grants times of less intense persecutions, and of course not all end in killing; they may range from social sneers, exclusion and passing over, vilification, and separation from home or family to seizure of goods or land, imprisonment, or torture. There will usually be an element of false accusation – good doings depraved, as historian John Foxe put it: “I wish no man so light eared, to be carried away for any sinister clamor of Adversaries, who many times deprave good doings, not for the faults they find, but therefore find faults because they [wish to] deprave.”¹⁷ Foxe discerned that the attacks against faithful witnesses are not due to any real fault, but are made falsely and hypocritically, only because their enemies want to discredit them.

Paul explained to the Thessalonians that the tribulations that attend persecutions were their appointed lot and, understanding their hardships, sent Timothy to them “to establish you and to comfort you over your faith, so no one would be moved in these afflictions.

For you yourselves know that we are appointed to this. When I was with you, I told you that we would suffer tribulation, even as it came to pass..." (1 Thessalonians 3:2,3)

Tyndale believed there would never be a church of God unpersecuted:

...while the world stands, God will never have a church that will either persecute, or be unpersecuted themselves...But there will be in the Church a fleshly seed of Abraham and a spiritual; a Cain and an Abel; an Ishmael and an Isaac; an Esau and a Jacob; as I have said, a worker and a believer; a great multitude of who are called, and a small flock of those who are elect and chosen. And the fleshly will persecute the spiritual; as Cain did Abel, and Ishmael Isaac, and so forth; and the great multitude will persecute the small little flock, and antichrist will ever be the best Christian man.¹⁸

Tyndale warns here that the Church at large will persecute the little church, the "small little flock", and that Antichrist will often work through he who seems to be "the best Christian man". What a hard saying this is! But it was not for no reason that Jesus

warned his disciples, "Beware of men, for they will deliver you up to the councils, and scourge you in their synagogues. And you will be brought to the head rulers and kings for my sake, in witness to them and to the Gentiles" (Matthew 10:18). Certain men, in excommunicating and slaying His disciples, would make the terrible error of thinking they offered God service. Jesus said:



"They will excommunicate you: yes, the time will come, that whoever kills you, will think that he does God service. And they will do such things to you, because they have not known the father, nor me" (John 16:1-3).

A man is racked in the Tower of London

The words of warning that Jesus spoke are for all disciples of all ages because, as Tyndale observed, persecutions will continue as long as the world stands.

Tyndale Neglected and Misrepresented

After a decade of deprivations, being hunted by enemies, and a long imprisonment, William Tyndale was killed at the instigation of religious leaders. And then, afterwards, he was largely passed over by the Christian Protestant community that relied so heavily upon his English translations of the Old and New Testaments. True, certain monuments have been erected to his name. Various organizations carry his name. But they often do not understand or remain true to his teaching; for example, Tyndale House published Tim LaHaye's novels promoting the very concept of a future Antichrist that Tyndale warned is false.¹⁹ Such lip service amounts to little more than adorning the tomb of the prophet (Matthew 23:29). Below are some examples of strong anti-Tyndale sentiment from publications of the Tyndale Society itself. And Tyndale's work on the Bible is largely unacknowledged and unknown, and it is hard to find his works in a Christian bookstore.

The fact is that for many decades after he died, Tyndale's work remained on proscribed lists, and any association with his name was generally avoided by those who sought influence with governing powers. Therefore the Bible of 1537 that contained all the scriptures he had been able to translate before his death – work that he had paid for with his blood – was called the 'Matthew' Bible. 'Matthew' was a pseudonym adopted primarily to conceal Tyndale's involvement.²⁰ This Bible might never have seen the light of day if Tyndale's name had been openly connected with it. Then, by reason of continuing prohibitions upon his work and passing over his name, Tyndale's identity as one of the men responsible for giving us our English Bible (along with Miles Coverdale and John Rogers) was largely forgotten. But even where he has been remembered, he has suffered: British professor David Daniell, historian and biographer of Tyndale in our century, writes that Tyndale "has been at best neglected and at worst twisted out of shape," and his work and skill are "not just neglected, but denied."²¹ He also notes that "It is a matter of increasing grief that Tyndale lives in modern scholarship upside-down."²² By this he means that Tyndale has been not only forgotten, but is also wrongly discredited in modern scholarship (so-called).

As to the years of silence, Patrick Collinson, in an article called *William Tyndale and the Course of the English Reformation*, called it "a paradox" that this man – who contributed so much to the English Reformation, and who was so important that he was determinedly pursued by enemies across international borders for years, and who knew himself and was known by others to have been given grace by God for his special work, and who significantly influenced both the course of English history and language, and who gave us the best and the most in our English Bible – that this man should have been "so soon forgotten."²³ Mr. Collinson noted the recognition Tyndale received in Foxe's *Book of Martyrs* as God's "Apostle to England", but then how swiftly he came to be ignored in Church histories, and his work diminished:

Thomas Fuller, in his mid-seventeenth-century *Church History of Britain*, merely obituarizes Tyndale when his narrative reaches 1536, the year of his death. And Fuller, strangely, suggests that the philological capacity of the great translator was distinctly limited... I am afraid that when we reach, a few years after Fuller, Gilbert Burnet's *History of the Reformation of the Church of England*, Tyndale is reduced to a walk-on part: "And William Tyndale made a translation of the New Testament in English, to which he added some short glosses. This was printed in Antwerp, and sent over into England in the year 1526. Against which there was a prohibition published every bishop in his diocese... There were also many other books prohibited that time, most of them written by Tyndale." End of story.²⁴

Collinson then observes that, a little later, Tyndale is not even named in historical accounts, being referred to simply as one of "the first translators". Then, he says, in the rising of the Protestant Church, the man who gave us our Bible "disappeared behind a new mountain range represented by Theodore Beza, the Geneva Bible, etc..."²⁵

In effect, Tyndale has been passed over despite his significant contribution to the English Bible. In the seventeenth century, as referenced earlier, up to 83% of Tyndale's scripture translation was adopted in the King James Bible (see endnote 12), and significant copying occurred with the Geneva and other versions, all without any credit to him: not an insignificant omission. However, Tyndale would have cared little, because

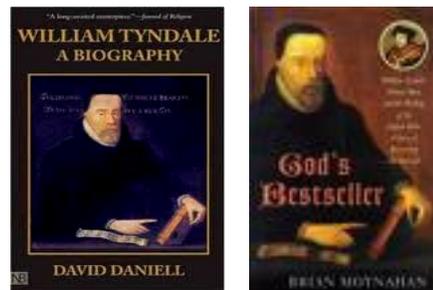
this copying largely preserved his testimony of God's word and meant it would be widely disseminated to the people. In any case, it was never important to him to have his name before men. Collinson notes that life itself – that is, life in this world – was unimportant to Tyndale compared with the unsurpassable priority of opening God's word to England. He recounts what happened when Henry VIII sent a man named Stephen Vaughan to the continent to locate Tyndale and see if he could be persuaded to return to England:

Stephen Vaughan had already reported back to control that...Tyndale had assured him that if Henry VIII would only allow a "bare text of the scripture to be published for the benefit of his people...I shall immediately make faithful promise never to write more"...In effect, Tyndale was saying that in those favourable circumstances there would be no need for him to exist, or ever to have existed, as a fugitive translator living in unlicensed exile.²⁶

Ultimately, says Vaughan, it was as if Tyndale had never existed:

And that, in a sense, is what happened after Tyndale was indeed eradicated, with the progressive adoption of the English Bible, to such an extent his Bible, by the English crown...Tyndale became, in Philip Howard's striking phrase, "the forgotten ghost in the English language."²⁷

But Tyndale was not completely forgotten. And there is greater access to his work now, including his Bible translations, through internet bookstores, facsimile reproductions, and due to the blessed publication of his Old and New Testaments in modern spelling by David Daniell. We also have two recent biographies: one by Bryan Moynahan called *God's Bestseller*, an interesting though secular history, and *William Tyndale: A Biography*, by Dr. Daniell. Modern technology has meant that Tyndale's testimony is being dusted off and brought to light, and some people are taking an interest.



Continuing Persecutions of Tyndale: 21st Century Examples

I say unto you that for every idle word that men shall have spoken, they shall give accounts at the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned. (Matthew 12:36,37)

There remain even now certain people, and certain spiritual powers, that would turn us from Tyndale's testimony, and discredit both it and him if they could. And so they slander his name, or misrepresent what he said, or invent faults. It is instructive to see recent efforts to do all this. Professor Daniell again: "We can now buy English Bibles freely. Our persecution of Tyndale is subtler... Any stick will do, it seems."²⁸

A survey of modern writing confirms that Tyndale is indeed still persecuted. What at first surprised me is that many accusing pens have repeatedly been given voice by the very organization which is named for this martyr, the Tyndale Society. This organization was founded by Professor Daniell, he who has been so concerned to advance a proper

understanding of and regard for Tyndale. Yet though the slurs against Tyndale are grievous at times, it can advance our understanding to examine the things that his enemies say against him. This is what I will attempt to do here. It is a way to learn about the man, his life, his work, and his teaching.

1. *Tyndale a Prophet to the Marginalized?*

An article published by the Tyndale Society entitled *Is Not Tyndale Also Among the Prophets*²⁹ seemed promising at first, but soon went astray. For example the author, Mr. David Keep, suggested that in earlier centuries William Tyndale “might have found his place in the library of a monastery.” This is unfair, because Tyndale deplored fraternities of monks, which he called the “shaven flock”³⁰. He would not have sought asylum in, or felt he belonged in, a monastery. For example, he wrote:

...neither is it lawful to forsake thy neighbour and to withdraw thyself from serving [your fellow man] and go into a den [monastery] and live idly, profitable to no man, but robbing all men – first of faith, and then of goods and land.³¹

In the above quotation Tyndale gives at least six reasons why he felt it would be wrong to join a monastery: (1) it is to go where you cannot serve your neighbour; (2) it is to live



A Monastery

idly; (3) it is to live in a way that does not profit others; (4) it is to rob others (by begging or by living from ill gotten money); (5) it is to participate with an organization that, by false teaching robs men of faith; and (6) it is to participate in robbing men of goods and land (as monasteries expanded their holdings or new orders were formed). Therefore, Mr. Keep misrepresented who Tyndale was and what he believed by saying he might have found his place in a monastery.

The conclusion to Mr. Keep’s article was perhaps most revealing, asserting that Tyndale was “...a prophet of that poor, semi-skilled social group which has supplied the radicals in religion and politics in every civilization.” Thus Tyndale, a linguist renowned in Europe for speaking eight languages like a native,³² and whose Bible translation was so good it has been copied down the centuries and gone all over the world, is reduced to a common radical, a prophet to the marginalized. One could be forgiven for thinking that these accusations might tend to marginalize Tyndale himself. David Daniell, however, observes that in fact Tyndale the prophet has reached over six hundred million people:

William Tyndale’s Bible translations have been the best-kept secrets in English Bible history...Yet no other Englishman – not even Shakespeare – has reached so many...Astonishment is still voiced that the dignitaries who prepared the 1611 Authorized Version for King James spoke so often with one voice – apparently miraculously. Of course they did: the voice (never acknowledged by them) was Tyndale’s...In 1611 there were six million English speakers; there are today at least six hundred million...³³

If we add up the numbers of the people Tyndale has reached through the scriptures over the five centuries since he was martyred, the total must exceed hundreds of millions.

2. Tyndale a Bitter Author of Ditties Who Shrieks Like an Animal?

Ditty: An especially simple and unaffected song

Shriek: a shrill, usually wild or involuntary, cry —Webster's Dictionary³⁴

In what Tyndale might describe as “poetry” (he did not appreciate myth, subtlety, or empty and distorted semantics) we find an *ad hominem* essay by Dr. Anne Richardson. It is ominously proposed as an introduction for her upcoming reproduction of Tyndale's book, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*. Her article was published in 2008 by the Tyndale Society.³⁵

First, a few words to describe Tyndale's book. *The Obedience* (as it is often called) is an important theological work. It sets out God's divine order for the governance of society, and of the home, congregation, and workplace. It complains against the ungodliness of cardinals, popes, and clerics who acted above the law. As we saw above, it exposes the doings and disguises of Antichrist. It also warns kings and rulers against becoming hangmen for Antichrist. Tyndale wrote:

Let the temporal power [kings and rulers], to whom God has given the sword to punish wrongdoers, look...and take care what they do...The powers to whom God has committed the sword will give accounts for every drop of blood that is shed on the earth.”³⁶



King Henry VIII

The Obedience was immediately outlawed in many countries in the Roman Empire where the Church held sway. But despite this, Anne Boleyn, who became King Henry VIII's second queen, obtained a copy. She became intrigued and showed it to the king. He also was intrigued, and it influenced decisions he made, though he misunderstood it. But whatever the result, we must admit that *The Obedience* was thus a book that witnessed to kings and queens.

Yet this book that came before Church and State, and which is over 150 pages long in my small-print edition, is described by Dr. Richardson as a “ditty”; that is, a short song. In particular, says Ms. Richardson, *The Obedience* is “a ditty to which Christian soldiers can march, including a collection of side-of-the-mouth cracks of survivor Lollards...” But she turns later and describes it as an “essay on figurative language”, as if it were meant for students of creative writing. I would not know how to categorize such a review. For if she has actually read *The Obedience*, Dr. Richardson is describing it falsely. But if she did not read it and understands so little of history, she ought not to comment upon it. If the truth of the matter is that she does not like it, she ought plainly to say so.

As if it were not enough to slight the work, Ms. Richardson also slights the person: Tyndale is variously called a voracious, fallen, failed fanatic, and is described as being full of bitterness, short on common sense, and, mysteriously, someone who “did not want to be disgusted” – as if becoming disgusted were a particular concern of his.

However, she does also describe him as “manly” and a person who “hated violence”: concessions to readers of the Tyndale Journal who actually respect the man, perhaps.

Of course, Ms. Richardson’s introduction to *the Obedience* is neither accurate nor honouring. But her comments must be recognized as trivial, for we can see that it is simply not possible to accuse Tyndale of anything that really matters. Fanatic? Bitter? What matters are the things Tyndale alleged against the Church of his day: fornication, greed, and murder.

In 2010 Ms. Richardson published a further article in the Tyndale Society Journal entitled *Tyndale Meets Goliath*.³⁷ “Goliath” is her name for the controversial Bishop, John Fisher. She refers to him as “Saint John Fisher” in accordance with the honours bestowed upon him by the Roman Church, but on account of his diligence in persecutions he has also been called “fierce Bishop Fisher”.³⁸

The fresh insults heaped upon Tyndale in Ms. Richardson’s second article are mostly quoted from other sources: a method, someone once observed, by which authors may avoid taking personal responsibility for them. Tyndale is now charged with being “ill-tempered”; a man who operated with “destructive force”, and a “wrathful” person who “had fun writing up his outraged feelings”. Further, he was “crowded with rage” and of “almost unreasoning fury”, “bad-tempered”, “humourless”, “thoroughly unpleasant”, and “unable to keep a friend for very long”. She quotes sources saying that Tyndale’s works “bring to mind the shrieks of a tortured animal” and that he was “livid with hatred, bitterness”. She wrongly writes that a “very lucid anonymous article in *The Economist* argues, Tyndale has befriended the (wicked) Mammon of unrighteousness”³⁹... All of which amounts to a verbal stoning, as it were.

Looking again at what Tyndale actually wrote in *The Obedience*, consider the sweetness of his first words:

God (who worketh all in all things) for a secret judgment and purpose, and for his godly pleasure, provided an hour when thy father and mother should come together to make thee through them. He was present with thee in thy mother’s womb, and fashioned thee, and breathed life into thee; and for the great love he had unto thee, provided milk in thy mother’s breasts for you in preparation for the time of your birth. He also moved your father and mother and all others to love thee, to pity thee, and to care for thee.⁴⁰

One is immediately struck by the lovely spirit behind Tyndale’s words. However it is true, as we have seen, that Tyndale does not shy away from decrying wrongdoing, and sometimes his words are startling in their directness. In fact, in *The Obedience* we read about Goliath – that is, Bishop Fisher – himself. He was then the Bishop of Rochester, and Tyndale refers to him simply as “Rochester,” a man who falsely accused Martin Luther of deeds that which he himself had committed:

Last of all, like a crafty thief who has been spotted and is being followed cries to the people, “Stop thief, stop thief!” ... even so Rochester lays to Martin Luther’s charge the slaying and murdering of Christian men ... which thing Rochester and his brethren have not stopped doing for almost a hundred years, with such malice that even when [Christian men] are

dead, they rage, burning their bodies, some of whom they themselves most likely killed before, secretly.⁴¹

Tyndale is saying that in order to deflect attention from himself, Bishop Fisher cried “murder!” against Martin Luther; but all the while he or his Church were guilty of the same. It is often the case that where there is false accusation there is also unwitting self-condemnation; the words of false accusers will return upon their own heads, and they will be judged by their own mouths.

Ms. Richardson concludes her article with the observation that by repeated re-editing of *The Obedience*, Tyndale’s “attack on Fisher remained fresh and entertaining for the vitality and springiness in Tyndale’s slingshot”. But was Tyndale throwing springy slingshots in order to entertain us? Of course not: that he leaves for the poets.

3. Tyndale a National Traitor in a Vernacular Literacy Movement?

Sedition: Incitement of resistance to or insurrection against lawful authority

Traitor: Someone who commits treason

Treason: The offense of attempting by overt acts to overthrow the government of the state to which the offender owes allegiance, or to kill or personally injure the sovereign or his family—Webster’s Dictionary

In another TSJ article by a Mr. Donald Smeeton, Tyndale’s translation of the scriptures, so foundational to our Bible, is summarily dismissed as “disqualified” for inaccuracy.⁴² This illustrates Professor Daniell’s complaints about the state of modern ‘scholarship’. Further, in Mr. Smeeton’s article men like Tyndale who gave their lives to open the scriptures to souls hungry for truth were little more than participants in a “vernacular literacy movement.” Well, maybe a little more: Mr. Smeeton links Tyndale’s translations with treason and sedition, “likely to lead to rebellion against secular authority” – particularly because putting *elder* for *priest*, etc., was “a subtle but significant attack on Church and State.” Mr. Smeeton then explains that “by the very nature of what they do, translators are in fact traitors”.



In making these charges Mr. Smeeton echoes what Tyndale’s enemies, including Sir Thomas More, were saying in the 16th century. For in order to enlist the secular sword to act against the dissident, serious offences must be found: hence treason, a charge which rings down the ages since the Pharisees accused Jesus (John 19:12).

Mr. Smeeton has apparently read at least some of Tyndale, and was astute enough to realize that Tyndale’s answer to such a charge now would be the same as it was then. Therefore he quotes from Tyndale’s introduction to *The Obedience*: “Let it not make thee despair, neither yet discourage thee, O reader, that it is forbidden thee in pain of life and goods, or that it is made breaking of the king’s peace, or treason unto his highness, to read the word of thy soul’s health.” Tyndale is saying that it is not treason, nor an act of insurrection against the king, to read the Bible.

The fact is that Jesus never taught anything but due obedience and honour to worldly authority: "Give unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" (M't 22:21, Mk 12:17; Lu 20:25). This teaching has always been echoed by His faithful disciples. The Apostle Paul wrote, "Let every soul submit himself unto the authority of the higher powers. For there is no power but of God...Give to every man therefore his dutie" (Ro 13:1,7). Accordingly, in *The Obedience*, in his chapter *The Obedience of All Degrees*, Tyndale wrote:

Such obedience unto father and mother, master, husband, emperor, king, lords, and rulers, God requires from all nations, yea, from the very Turks and infidels ... Neither may an inferior person avenge himself upon the superior or violently resist him for whatsoever wrong it be. If he does, he is condemned in the deed doing, inasmuch as he taketh upon him that which belongeth to God only...⁴³

Quoting the scriptures, Tyndale writes in *The Obedience*:

The powers that be are ordained by God. Whosoever therefore resisteth that power, resisteth the ordinance of God.⁴⁴

Tyndale taught everywhere that men must obey the governing powers in all things that are not contrary to God. Therefore it is unjust to charge him with sedition or treason, which are offences against the state or its sovereign. Such charges go glaringly contrary to all he ever wrote. Even if it could be said that he broke laws that made it illegal to translate the scriptures (which is another argument), this is not the same thing as to commit treason; jay-walkers and murderers alike are breaking laws, but they cannot be charged with treason.

It should be noted that Tyndale published *The Obedience* in 1528, six years before King Henry VIII named himself the head of the Church of England. How Tyndale might have dealt with this jointure of civil and religious office I do not know. In any event, he did not seek to unseat any civil authority. His challenges were against those Church leaders who had become everything they should not be, taking from the poor and accumulating wealth for themselves, selling licenses to sin, claiming all unlawful authority over the consciences of men and over their rulers, and refusing to submit themselves to the law.

In his support of civil obedience, Tyndale even penned the following to exhort his readers to obey oppressive kings and rulers (though not to wrongful acts):

Furthermore, though he be the greatest tyrant in the world, yet is he unto thee a great benefit from God and a thing wherefore thou oughtest to thank God highly ... it is better to suffer one tyrant than many, and to suffer wrong from one than from every man. Yea, and it is better to have a tyrant as thy king than a shadow, a passive king that doth nought himself, but suffer others to do with him what they will, and to lead him wherever they wish ... A king that is soft as silk and effeminate ... shall be much more grievous unto the realm than a right tyrant. Read the chronicles and thou shalt find it ever so.⁴⁵

Ironically, after the king became head of both Church and State in 1534, some of Tyndale's accusers began to die for treason. Sir Thomas More was beheaded in 1535

by Henry VIII because he refused to acknowledge the king as head of the Church. The charge? High treason. He did at least demonstrate the courage of his convictions.

4. *Tyndale a Betrayer and Judas?*

Judas: One who betrays under the guise of friendship — Webster's Dictionary



In another article from the Tyndale Society, *Betrayers and Betrayal in the Age of William Tyndale*,⁴⁶ we find scholarly ruminations from Mr. Peter Marshall about Tyndale and his experience with the man who betrayed him, Henry Phillips. Phillips, a known thief and a gambler who had fallen into disgrace⁴⁷, was hired to hunt down Tyndale and assist in his capture. Phillips duly located Tyndale, who was then living in a boarding house in Antwerp. Phillips posed as a friend and fellow believer, but all along his true intentions were to turn the unsuspecting translator over to enemies who wanted to kill him. Eventually he saw his opportunity, and, under the pretext of going to a meal with him, led him into a trap. Tyndale was seized by soldiers. Thus was Tyndale betrayed to his enemies and delivered to a painful and public death by a man he trusted – a man who, in fact, had befriended him duplicitously for this very purpose.

Mr. Marshall suggests in his carefully worded essay that we should not necessarily consider Mr. Phillip's actions a 'betrayal'; after all, 'betrayal' is not a neutral description of what happened:

...we need to recognize at the outset that the pejorative term '*betrayal*' is an interpretation of an event, not a neutral description of it. The suggestion that Henry Phillips should be seen as a principled defender of the Old Faith, bravely adopting a false persona in order to help arrest the growth of egregious heresy, might well make us feel uncomfortable. Yet that, just perhaps, is how he represented his actions to himself ... Betrayal is in the eye of the beholder.

But this is a specious objection. The verb *to betray* simply means "to deliver to an enemy by treachery" (*Websters*). A *betrayal* is an instance of the same. *Treachery* is a violation of confidence. These words objectively and verifiably describe what Phillips did. Even if Tyndale were a vile monster and Phillips an angel – even if Tyndale was robbing the poor and Phillips was seeking justice – there is no getting around the fact that Phillips betrayed Tyndale.

Then Mr. Marshall, adding private speculation to his analysis, says maybe Phillips told himself he was a "principled defender" – defender of the Old Faith. Now is this "neutral"? Surely this description is actually a subjective interpretation of an event; and if so, is Mr. Marshall not caught by his own words? And how about *brave*: neutral description? Further, what was brave about Phillips' charade? He had cloak, dagger, and all temporal power on his side, and was never in any danger – except danger to his soul, of course,

for living a lie with intent to destroy a life, in which danger also are those who approve of his deeds (Ro 1:32).

But Mr. Marshall goes on to suggest that Phillips was actually guilty of a “much greater betrayal” than entrapping Tyndale. This “greater betrayal”, he says, was disobedience to King Henry VIII – disobedience like that of those English religious exiles who lived on the continent. With a moment’s reflection, we may recognize the unspoken implications of this comment: Tyndale was just such a religious exile living on the continent. Therefore Tyndale’s betrayal of his king was “greater” than Phillips’ betrayal of him. Here it is again, the tired old refrain: treason and sedition. And then the parting shot: Mr. Marshall subtly implicates Tyndale as a Judas, yes, the ultimate betrayer: for Tyndale was an outsider and outcast from the Church community and Mr. Marshall writes:

The Judas of the middle ages was the ultimate outsider and outcast, the distorted reflection of a fundamentally united Christian community.

But Tyndale did not pretend friendship in order to betray anyone. He accepted no money to hand someone over to his enemies; on the contrary, we can be sure he would have refused any such commission. In fact, it was the “united Christian community” that paid Phillips to betray Tyndale, and it was Phillips who, by any understanding of the facts and the word, was the Judas.

Finally, we observe that the scriptures themselves employ the term *betray*. This occurs when we read of the actions of the first Judas, the lost man who supped with Jesus and betrayed him with a kiss:

And Jesus ascended to Jerusalem, and took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said to them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and the son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests, and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death...(Matthew 20:17,18)

It is not beside the point that Jesus was also an outsider from His religious community. What’s more, He, like Tyndale, was murdered by the leaders thereof after betrayal by a pretended friend who received 30 pieces of silver to do the deed.

5. *There is No Evidence That Tyndale Was Martyred for the Bible?*

Another author, whose book I found on the Web, goes so far as to deny Tyndale’s very work and death for the scriptures. Mr. John Leemans writes: “It is particularly surprising that Tyndale is so often portrayed as a martyr for the English Bible, because all the available evidence speaks to the contrary.”⁴⁸ This utterly false statement substantiates Professor Daniell’s claim that some people will even deny plain facts. Ironically, Tyndale died so that Mr. Leemans could have the Bible: so that all, even his enemies, could have it, that they might be saved. It was Tyndale who gave us these sayings of Jesus:

Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you. Pray for them which do you wrong and persecute you (Matthew 5:44,45).

These are Tyndale’s words from his translation, which he obviously thought to be of great importance since he gave his life so we could have them.

Unremitting Voices Raised Against a Faithful Testimony

If they have called the lord of the house Beelzebub: how much more shall they call them of his household so? Fear them not therefore. (Matthew 10:25,26)

Although it is often man's way to honour deceased persons regardless of poor character, in William Tyndale's case he is dishonoured regardless of good character. *The Economist* reported on Tyndale's unblemished record in a December 2008 article:

Tyndale was ultimately more influential, and also in many ways a nobler figure, than the more famous religious martyrs of the Tudor era, the Catholic Thomas More and the Protestant Thomas Cranmer. Both More and Cranmer served their time as enforcers of religious intolerance before falling victim to it themselves. No such stain sullies the record of Tyndale.⁴⁹



The Economist also records Tyndale's honesty, faithfulness to conscience and truth, and his evident good character as proved under the most trying of circumstances, his imprisonment in Vilvoorde:

Jailed in the vast and forbidding fortress of Vilvoorde, Tyndale could easily have saved his life by agreeing with the Catholic hierarchy that the Bible was best left in Latin for the clergy to peruse. But he maintained his refusal in a way that impressed his Flemish jailers. "He had so preached to them who had him in charge...that they reported of him, that if he were not a good Christian man, they knew not whom they might take to be one."⁵⁰

This last quotation is from John Foxe, but omits Foxe's report that some of the jailer's family, seeing Tyndale's goodness, were converted through his preaching of the Gospel – and so it was that God used him to the last.⁵¹

However the modern voices of Tyndale's enemies reveal that there remain unremitting forces arrayed against this faithful servant, forces intent upon discrediting him even as we enter the 21st century. They "gather together against the life of the righteous, condemning innocent blood" (Psalm 94:21). Those reviewed here are only a few examples of the upside-down scholarship that Professor Daniell laments. Indeed, such "scholarship" would cast not just Tyndale, but all the struggles of the Lollards and of the Reformation era in a false light. Truth and morality are sacrificed upon the altar of "revisionist history" in recent publications, as hatred becomes "charitable hatred",⁵² Bloody Mary, who sent about three hundred people to agonizing deaths, becomes Pastoral Mary,⁵³ the betrayer Henry Phillips becomes a defender, and William Tyndale, who harmed no man, becomes a traitor and a Judas.

But as Tyndale said, "the great multitude will persecute the small little flock." And really, we should not be surprised to see something like an army raised up against him, considering the greatness of his work. For one, he was part of the small group of men who succeeded in freeing the scriptures from the lock-up of the Roman Church. For

another, his translations of the Greek and Hebrew scriptures are of eternal significance, bringing God's life-giving word to the world – a matter of heaven, hell, and the life hereafter. That English is so widely spoken, and a language of international importance, adds to its significance. And through copying by others, Tyndale's work endures to this day, still feeding the small little flock. But the spiritual falsehoods he witnessed against, and the antichrists he exposed, also endure to this day – and so his testimony must be diminished or suppressed by whatever means may be available.

Voices that accuse and discredit Tyndale should therefore be understood as battle cries in the war on truth and the word of God. We might expect to hear them even as long as English is spoken in the earth.

Least Among Men: Eternal Rewards

The wise (such as have taught others) shall glister as the shining of heaven, and those that have instructed the multitude unto godliness shall be as the stars, world without end. (Daniel 12:3)

Alas, many do not receive Tyndale as the prophet he was. A true prophet is one whose testimony of God's word is faithful. And Jesus said, "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet, will receive a prophet's reward...And whoever would give to one of these little ones to drink, a cup of cold water only, in the name of a disciple: I tell you a truth, he will not lose his reward" (Matthew 10:41,42). But to call Tyndale a failure or common radical or a Judas, or to ponder treasonous associations in connection with his work – these things are to reject him as a prophet. And figuratively, of course, they are certainly not to offer Him a cup of cold water. (What, then, will be God's reward to Tyndale's persecutors?)

However Tyndale, were he to look upon us now – and though he would mourn for men – might rejoice to see how his name still suffers. For it speaks to the continuing power of his work. Do so many attacks not show that he remains a significant threat? How many men as accomplished as Tyndale have been so paradoxically and meanly discredited, and for so long?

What needs to be recognized is that by on-going slights, hostility, and rejection, Tyndale's testimony is in fact proven and maintained. It matters; therefore it is attacked. The scriptures – both the Old and New Testaments – show that great persecutions signal great prophets: consider Jeremiah, Paul, and John. Most of us fear the dishonour that attends such rejection by society. But to be least among men for God's name, though a curse in the eyes of the world, is greatness in the kingdom of heaven, for, "...he that is least among you all, the same will be great" (Luke 9:48).

The divine irony, therefore, is that to persecute and discredit Tyndale in earth will only serve to credit and reward him in heaven. This is important, and assists in understanding the paradox noted by Collinson; again, the ways of God are not the ways of men. Snubbed by many prelates and doctors of the Church, reproached by dissident pens, his name oft in disrepute, may William Tyndale count himself blessed:

Blessed are you when men hate you, and thrust you out of their company,
and rail, and abhor your name as an evil thing, for the son of man's sake.

Rejoice then, and be glad: for behold, your reward is great in heaven. In this way their fathers also treated the prophets (Luke 6:22,23).

Therefore we would err to expect Tyndale's death to have satisfied his enemies, because his testimony lives on. And the measure of opposition to it is a measure of its great worth. All the prohibitions upon his work, hunting and burning him, burning his bible and books, burning any one who read them or even possessed them, diminishing and suppressing his teachings, twisting his story and attacking his good name – all this witnesses to the value of the spiritual truths of which he spoke. As he wrote, we have “an evident token [sign] through such persecution that it is the true word of God. Which word is ever hated by the world, nor was ever without persecution (as you see in all the stories of the Bible...) – nor can be, no more than the sun can be without his light.”⁵⁴

* * * * *

©Ruth P Magnusson Davis

Endnotes:

¹ Tyndale's real contribution to the English Bible is little known by the public, but is generally acknowledged by Bible historians. A. S. Herbert wrote in his *Historical Catalogue of Printed Editions of The English Bible 1525-1961, Revised and Expanded from the Edition of T. H. Darlow and H. F. Moule, 1903* (London, The British and Foreign Bible Society, 1968), at page 18: “This version [the Matthew Bible], which welds together the best work of Tyndale and [Miles] Coverdale, is generally considered to be the real primary version of our English Bible.” John Rogers was also responsible for producing the Matthew Bible. See note 12 for more information about the extent of the KJV reliance on Tyndale's translations, and see “About the Matthew Bible” at <http://www.newmatthewbible.org/about.html>

² This is a rhyming jingle, translated from German, which was actually employed to sell indulgences. Historian Roland Bainton explains the history of the sale of indulgences in his engaging biography, *Here I Stand*. See also Tyndale's or Luther's various works, detailing atrocities. A note on Professor Bainton: I recommend his biography of Luther, but he was a Unitarian and was opposed to Luther's Christianity, though his biography contains one of the better presentations of the Gospel that I have read from an unbeliever. In other books, Bainton made questionable accusations against Luther (among other problems).

³ Tyndale, William, *The Obedience of a Christian Man* (hereafter “*The Obedience*”), (Penguin Books, 2000), p. 155.

⁴*The Obedience*, p. 170.

⁵ Tyndale, William, *An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue* (Hereafter “*Answer*”) (Wipf and Stock Publishers 2006 edition of Parker Society edition, Edited by Henry Walter, Cambridge, 1850), p 40. The Roman Church had great power and influence in most of Europe, whence the name “Holy Roman Empire”.

⁶ Coverdale, Miles (Myles), *An Exhortation to the Carrying of Christ's Cross* as contained in *Remains of Myles Coverdale* (Bibliolife facsimile of Parker Society Edition edited by Rev. George Pearson, Cambridge University Press, 1846), p. 243.

⁷ In *The Obedience* Tyndale discusses at length, over many pages, the doings of the Beast by the spirit of Antichrist. At page 36 he writes, “...if any man will obey neither father nor mother, neither lord nor master, neither king nor prince, the same needeth but only to take the mark of the beast, that is, to shave himself a monk, a friar or a priest, and is then immediately free and exempted from all service and obedience due unto man.” It is this writer's understanding that to take the mark of the beast in the forehead is to worship the Beast, and to take the mark in one's hand is to serve or do the work of the Beast (Rev 14:9). Note, Tyndale never confined the work of Antichrist to the Roman Church or any single Church: see Tyndale, *Parable of the Wicked Mammon* (Benediction Classics facsimile reprint, 2008) pp 4-5.

⁸ Tyndale was ‘degraded’, or formally stripped of his office in the R.C. Church, before his execution.

⁹ See note 19 and related text.

¹⁰ From Tyndale's *Exposition of Matthew* as set out in *Expositions and Notes on Sundry Portions of the Holy Scriptures, Together with The Practice of Prelates*, by William Tyndale (Wipf and Stock Publishers 2004 edition of Parker Society edition, Edited by Henry Walter, Cambridge, 1849), p. 23.

¹¹ As to the extent of the KJV's reliance upon Tyndale: "A computer-based American study published in 1998 has shown just how much Tyndale is in the KJV New Testament. New Testament scholars Jon Nielson and Royal Skousen observed that previous estimates of Tyndale's contribution to the KJV 'have run from a high of up to 90% (Westcott) to a low of 18% (Butterworth)'. By a statistically accurate and appropriate method of sampling, based on eighteen portions of the Bible, they concluded that for the New Testament Tyndale's contribution is about 83% of the text, and in the Old Testament 76%". Daniell, David, *The Bible in English* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2003), p. 448.

¹² For example, see Daniell, David, *William Tyndale, A Biography* (hereafter "*Biography*"), (New Haven & London, Yale University Press, 1994, Yale Nota Bene edition 2001), at p. 3 where he writes, "...he [Tyndale] made a language for England. It is a common-place of Reformation history that Martin Luther seized the chance of advanced Greek studies to make a New Testament in German that gave a disunited Germany a language for the time; it has not been noised abroad sufficiently clearly that Tyndale did something even greater for England...At a time when English was struggling to find a form that was neither Latin nor French, Tyndale gave the nation a Bible language that was English in words, word-order and lilt...he made phrases which have gone deep into English-speaking consciousness..."

¹³ See Moynahan, Brian, *God's Bestseller* St. Martin's Press, New York 2002, esp at p.341. Moynahan impartially covers the dispute between Tyndale and More. Tyndale's book *An Answer to Sir Thomas More's Dialogue* was in response to More's first publication against him. After *Answer* was published, More took it upon himself to again write against Tyndale, publishing in 1532 his *Confutation of Tyndale's Answer*, a mammoth work which was little read due to its great length.

¹⁴ Scripture quotations are taken either from the 1537 or 1549 *Matthew Bible*, spelling modernized by this writer, or from David Daniell's modern spelling edition of Tyndale's New Testament. I will also have performed minimal editing to update grammar and language.

¹⁵ The truths Tyndale put forth faithfully in his translations of the Old and New Testaments have been increasingly whittled at by revisers and distorted by expositions that slide away from the doctrines Tyndale expressed or himself expounded in explanatory notes. Attacks against the underlying Greek text (called the "Received Text") used by Tyndale and the KJV have gathered strength.

¹⁶ *The Obedience*, p. 98. Tyndale wrote at pp. 106-107 that exposing hypocrisy earns the most deadly persecutions.

¹⁷ Foxe, John, *A Protestation to the Whole Church of England, 1570*, contained in *Acts and Monuments of the Christian Church, Vol.1*, (1684 Edition) (hereafter, *Foxe's Acts*) pp xvii-xxii. I work with a facsimile copy obtained from Bible dealers Greatsite.com. This book came out in many editions both during and after Foxe's life, and is sometimes called *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*. Beware of modern versions, which have greatly falsified Foxe's history and reduced his monumental work to a fraction of its size. Beware also of men who would deprave and discredit Foxe's accuracy and integrity. Though he fell into some of the faults of those who are not entirely free of the hold of the Church, the incredible care which he put into his work, and the detail and supporting documents, show integrity and scholarship. J. F. Mozley makes a good defence in *John Foxe and His Book*, generally available in second hand editions.

¹⁸ Tyndale, *Answer*, p. 107. This excerpt minimally modernized.

¹⁹ Explained in the article "Tyndale's Doctrine of Antichrist and His Translation of 2 Thessalonians 2" posted at <http://www.newmatthewbible.org/topics.html>.

²⁰ Herbert, *Historical Catalogue*, p 18.

²¹ Daniell, *Biography*, p. 2.

²² Daniell, *Biography*, p. 4.

²³ Collinson, Patrick, *William Tyndale and the Course of the English Reformation*, taken from the Web in 2008, <http://www.tyndale.org/Reformation/1/collinson.html> , p.1. Not all preceding observations upon Tyndale are Collinson's; some are this author's.

²⁴ Collinson, pp. 1-2.

²⁵ Collinson, p. 4.

²⁶ Collinson, p. 5.

²⁷ Collinson, p. 5.

-
- ²⁸ Daniell, Introduction to *Tyndale's New Testament*, p. xxix. Tyndale often referred to the futile and ungodly "scholarship" of his era. As the writer of Ecclesiastes said, there is nothing new under the sun.
- ²⁹ Keep, David, from the Web, 2008. <http://www.tyndale.org/TSJ/3/keep.html>.
- ³⁰ *Answer*, p. 13.
- ³¹ *The Obedience*, p. 133.
- ³² Professor Daniell in his introduction to *Tyndale's New Testament* writes, "The scholar Buschius is reported to have said that Tyndale's New Testament had been translated by a man 'who is so skilled in seven tongues, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, Spanish, English, French, that whichever he speaks you might think it is his native tongue' [German is taken for granted]." See p. xxiii.
- ³³ Daniell, Introduction to *Tyndale's New Testament*, p. vii.
- ³⁴ All dictionary references are to *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* of 1975.
- ³⁵ Richardson, Anne, *The American "Obedience" – A Progress Report*, 2008, Tyndale Society Journal No 34, p. 21-24.
- ³⁶ *The Obedience*, p. 106. Minimally edited to modernize.
- ³⁷ Richardson, Anne, *Tyndale Meets Goliath*, Tyndale Society Journal, Issue 38, p. 42, esp pp 48, 49. Bishop Fisher was a Roman Catholic cleric. Ms. Richardson denies any allegiance to the Roman Church (See Tyndale Society Journal, Issue 36, p.70).
- ³⁸ Moynahan, in *God's Bestseller*, reviews the actions of Mr. Fisher at some length, and refers to him as "fierce Bishop Fisher" at page 50.
- ³⁹ This bizarre interpretation of the *Economist* article is at page 45 of the TSJ article. Dr. Richardson gives no quotations from the article to support it. The *Economist* article is briefly discussed later in my essay.
- ⁴⁰ *The Obedience*, p. 31. (The late page number is due to the length and number of introductions and prologues that precede the book itself.) I have made certain updates, e.g. "who" for "which".
- ⁴¹ *The Obedience*, pp. 78-79. (again, this extract is minimally updated for comprehension). In the 1st chapter of *God's Bestseller*, Bryan Moynahan describes how the Church dug up the bones of John Wycliffe, long since deceased, and publicly cursed and burned them.
- ⁴² Smeeton, Donald, *The Significance of the Tyndale-More Debate in this Post-Modern Era*, 2008, Tyndale Society Journal No. 34, p. 25; esp. pp. 26-28.
- ⁴³ *The Obedience*, pp. 37, 38.
- ⁴⁴ *The Obedience*, p. 36.
- ⁴⁵ *The Obedience*, pp 41,42.
- ⁴⁶ Marshall, Peter, *Betrayers and Betrayal in the Age of William Tyndale*, 2008, Tyndale Society Journal No. 34, p 34, esp. p 36.
- ⁴⁷ See Daniell, *Biography*, at p. 362, and the following account.
- ⁴⁸ From a page offered on Amazon.com in 2008 for a book by Johan Leemans: *More Than A Memory* (Peeters Publishers, 2005), p. 319.
- ⁴⁹ *The Economist*, December 20th 2008 – January 2nd 2009, p 102.
- ⁵⁰ *The Economist*, p. 103.
- ⁵¹ Daniell, *Biography*, p. 381.
- ⁵² See review by MacCulloch, Diarmaid, of the book *Charitable Hatred: Tolerance and Intolerance in England*, in *Reformation Journal*, Volume 12, 2006, p. 199. The twisting of Reformation history, and the diminishment of the significance of the spiritual battles then fought and won for the word of God, provide further evidence that Antichrist remains hard at work suppressing truth, and in particular the knowledge of himself. See "Tyndale's Doctrine of Antichrist" mentioned at note 20 above, and also posted on Scribd at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/21317530/William-Tyndale-on-Antichrist-Lost-Doctrine>
- ⁵³ E.g. of the book *The Church of Mary Tudor* it is said, "This book proves that the Church of Mary Tudor was remarkably successful in...pastoral care [and] supplies a framework for 'trying to get the story right' (xv) that will fundamentally reshape the religious and political landscape of the English Reformation." Rankin, Mark, *Reformation Journal*, Volume 12, 2007, p. 204.
- ⁵⁴ *The Obedience*, p. 3. Minimally modernized.

* * * * *