

It is hard to estimate the effects of Wycliffe's work. Through the preaching of his committed followers, the Lollards, a great deal of good was achieved throughout England although the later persecution undid a lot of it! So I think I will have to leave it at this point and move ahead. He is surely the father of modern Bible translation as well as of the English language as a literary medium.

5. *a.* Dramatic events between Wyclif and Tyndale.

Most of the books on the subject list three major events as being important and necessary in understanding the development of the English Bible. These three are:

- (1) the development of printing from movable type
- (2) the renaissance which was moving into fuller bloom and fomenting an interest in the classics and scholastic writings from the past.
- (3) the reformation which had broken out in Europe and had resulted in a widespread new interest in the Scriptures.

In connexion with these the printing of the New Testament (Greek) following the work of Erasmus as important and the German Bible of Martin Luther was indicative of the work to come. I will try not to elaborate on these too much...the first is critical to a widespread edition of the Bible and the last probably was necessary to break the hierarchical stranglehold on the Bible and the public learning.

6. William Tyndale (1494-1536)

As with Wiclif, the life of Tyndale is necessary in understanding His work...at least a brief sketch of that life.

a. Life:

There is not much known about his background although his birthplace and early home are known and memorialized in England. He was of a scholarly mold and mastered Greek and the classical studies early and by 1520 was employed for the family of Sir John Walsh as a tutor. He had already been ordained a priest and we are not sure when and how he came to the convictions about the Bible that were to be his life's occupation. But at the Walsh manor he argued with the resident clergy...whom he found to be ignorant of Biblical truth and unable to present the doctrines of the faith in a rational biblical way. It is said that he then determined to make the Bible available to all the English people and the famous quote is to the end that a ploughboy might know more about the Bible than many of the clergy. In 1523 he went to London and hoped to get the approval of the Bishop for a translating project. Failing in this he worked in the home of a friendly London merchant for a year and then in 1524 went to Europe..knowing that he would not be able to find a publisher in London. His life in Europe is like a spy novel as he moved from place to place, worked on the translation, found publishers, avoided the gendarmes, and eventually was taken captive and martyred in 1536. It is not certain he ever met Luther but he did know some of Luther's followers. He enjoyed the great ill will of Henry VIII and most of the clerics even after Henry broke with the Roman church. But his work is fundamental to the modern understanding of the Bible and he is one of the truly great heroes of the English reformatory movement..albeit he was one in absentia.